



HELPER & BAKER

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THE

SHADOW

TM

ANNUAL



HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

AGENTS

PUBLISHORIAL

JENETTE • KAHN

Barbara Kesel is sitting on the other side of my desk talking eagerly and quickly, her face aglow with excitement. These days, I tend to attribute such radiance to the fact that only three months ago Barbara married inker Karl Kesel. The honeymoon clearly isn't over yet, but right now her passion is reserved for something else, the phenomenon that's come to be known as gaming.

Like all editors at DC, Barbara is passionate about comic books. And this year, she's been able to combine both ardent enthusiasm, comics and gaming. Under her aegis, DC will soon be bringing out comics based on TSR's now-famous games, **DRAGONLANCE**, **ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS**, and **GAMMARAUDERS**.

It was sales and marketing vice president Bruce Bristow who actually championed this idea. Bruce is out in the real world more than most of us and he returned from one of his journeys with the inspiration, let's create comics based on fantasy games. Barbara was assigned the project because she's been a dedicated gamer herself, playing, during the peak of her involvement, two days a week and preparing for the games the other five.

Says Barbara, speaking from experience in both comics and gaming: "A lot of the gamers I've met fit the same mold as comic book people—overly intelligent and sensitive people looking for an outlet."

Barbara got involved in gaming when she was twenty, but role-playing games had been around since the middle of the 1970s. That's when *Dungeons and Dragons*, the grandfather of today's role-playing games, was invented.

"Basically these games are created," Barbara explains, "so that people fond of war-gaming or board-gaming will have an opportunity to act out their fantasies. Suddenly, you're not General Lee leading the troops, you are Magnus the Mighty facing the dragon."

Winning is not an appropriate concept for role-playing games, but there are statistics that help you compare your creations to others. In addition, you can chart your progress as the characters you play gain in experience and are able, as a result, to acquire more weapons, more skills, or more spells. Interestingly, says Barbara, "progress in the game is based not only on how well you detect monsters and solve traps but on how well you stay in character."

"The game board in a role-playing game is made up in partnership," Barbara continues. Sometimes you map out every square inch in the city, sometimes it's more hazy. A verbal environment is often created. And the point is for you to have a character that you play as though you were an actor.

"You have a character who is a Gamemaster and he or she sets the parameters for the games. In a circle of gamers, each player will likely have a notebook full of characters that he's invented. Or, in gaming lingo, you can use random rolling, the whole process of creating a character from the roll of the dice."

Dungeons and Dragons, the first of the role-playing games, was heavily influenced by J.R.R. Tolkien. *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* is a more complex and adult variation of it. The comic book version of *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* will be written by Michael L. Fleisher and drawn by Jan Duursema.

DragonLance operates under the AD&D (*Advanced Dungeons and Dragons*) gaming system. *DragonLance* features the world of Krynn complete with good dragons and bad dragons, old wizards and magic, and the Grand Queen of Evil, etc. In *DragonLance* we are convinced of two insights: 1) the triumph of evil is not inevitable, and 2) things are not completely good or evil no matter what they're named.

Barbara surmises that "The creators of *DragonLance* must have sat down and said, 'let's do a real world with real characters'." The DC comic book based on *DragonLance* (written by Dan Mishkin and drawn by Ron Randall and Randy Elliott) will weave in and out of the time line of the *DragonLance* Novels that came out concurrently with the *DragonLance* Game. Similarly, DC will use some of the original *DragonLance* characters but has added its own. We're not, Barbara assures me, recapitulating the *DragonLance* Novels.

Finally, in our third comic book, **GAMMARAUDERS** (written by Peter Gillis and drawn by Martin King), we are, according to Barbara, "using the board game as a starting point and helping TSR make up the world as we go. It's giant monsters meet 1950s chrome cars and become part of the something new."

Look in your comic book shop for **DRAGONLANCE** in August, **ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS** in October and **GAMMARAUDERS** in November. Look in your comic shop, too, for the games themselves. If you can't find them there, check bookstores and gaming shops.

There was a word, "synergy," that was very popular in the 1970s. Loosely, it was used to talk about companies or projects or people who had so much in common that each part fed and energized the other. That's who we feel about working with TSR, the company that created AD&D, *DragonLance*, and *Gammaraiders*. It amazes us how similar we are to TSR or how alike our readers and their gamers are. Gamers even have conventions, as we do, where the equivalent of our star artists and writers are their game designers and the best of their Gamemasters.

As Barbara says: "One of the things I discovered when I went to TSR was that I knew these guys. They may have had different faces and different bodies but I knew them."

If you're a gamer, we feel strongly that you'll want to read the DC comics based on role-playing games. If you're a comic reader, you may want to try gaming and we can't think of a better way to be introduced than starting with a comic book based on gaming parameters. Pick up **DRAGONLANCE**, **AD&D**, and **GAMMARAUDERS**. Then let your imagination loose.



BE SURE TO PICK UP
DRAGONLANCE #1—
ON SALE NOW!

DC LIST

THIS WEEK

THE PRISONER 1

Oean Motter returns to the Village and the life of Number Six—20 years later! A four-part mini-series. ★►

THE SHADOW ANNUAL 2

A retrospective of the Shadow's career—all to discover the meaning of his last words! ◆►▲

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES 53

Mon-El begins his quest for the last Psion while the Emerald Eye undertakes a quest of its own! ◆►

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY 621

Joe Orlando and Blackhawk start off the issue, featuring Deadman, Wild Dog, Blackhawk, Superman and the Secret Six. ●

BATMAN 426

"A Death in the Family Begins" and you decide who lives and dies—plus . . . The Joker! ●

CAPTAIN ATOM ANNUAL 2

Captain Atom invades the Queen Bee's Bialya with Rocket Red, Sarge Steel and Major Force on his side! ●

SECRET ORIGINS 33

Beginning a three-part look at the origins of the JLIers—this month: Mister Miracle, Green Flame and Ice-maiden. ●

DRAGONLANCE 1

Beginning the DC/TSR line as we present all-new stories set in this fantasy realm! ◆►

HAYWIRE 3

The search for a killer continues . . . and Haywire confronts the female fury named Nightlash! ◆▲►

HELLBLAZER 12

The truth about the Newcastle incident concludes and Constantine is let to ponder his future. ◆▲►

TAILGUNNER JD 4

Cybernetic showdown at the I/D corral: Tailgunner and Jo versus the Improv-X! ◆▲►

DEADSHOT 2

Deadshot begins the search for his son as other mysteries unfold and the hit-man Pantha finds Deadshot. ●

GREEN ARROW 11

Green Arrow and Shado are on the run from the Yakuza starting in Hawaii and ending . . . who knows where? ◆▲►

SUPERMAN 24

Kerry Gammill joins on as penciller in time for the return of Rampage. Superman has his hands full this month! ●

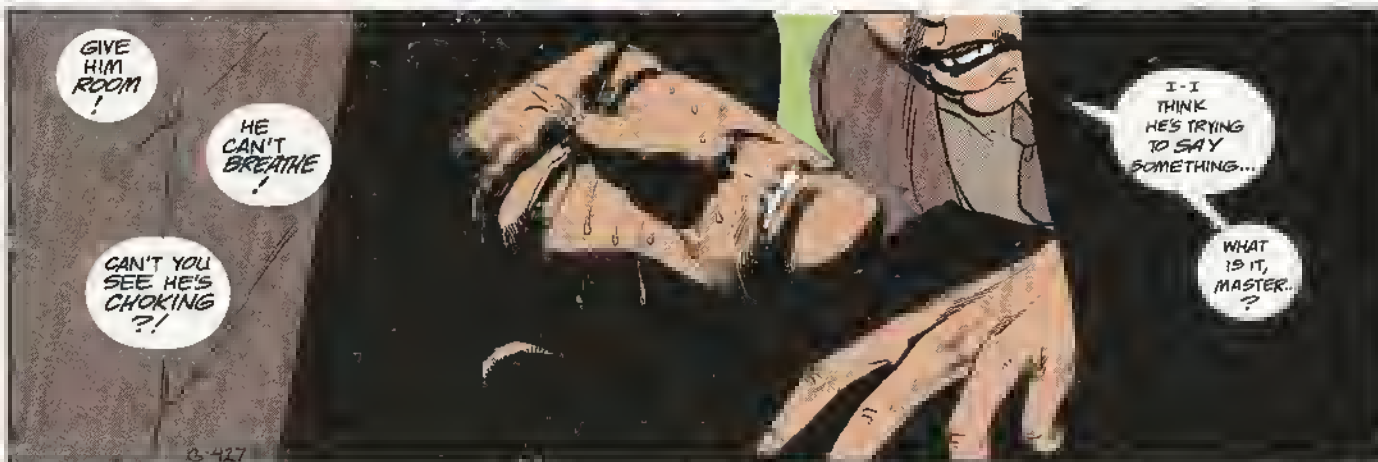
LEGEND

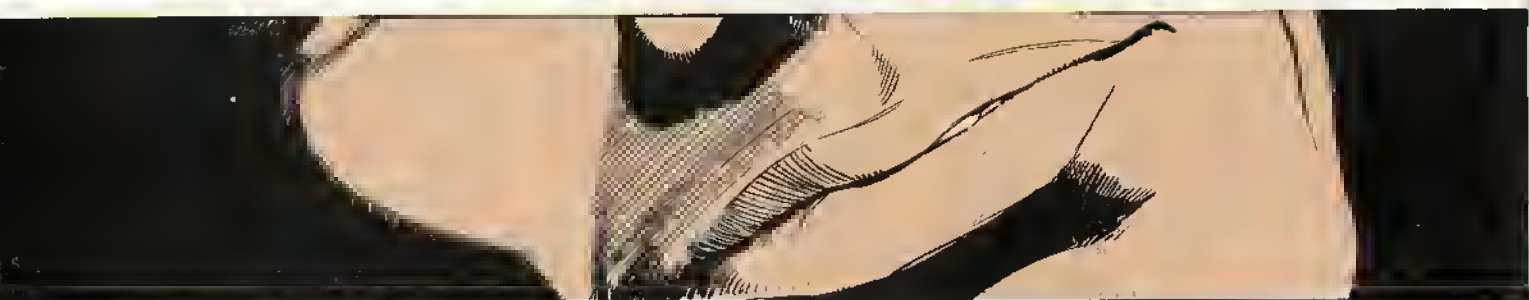
- Standard Format
- New Format
- ◆ Deluxe Format
- Available at Select Outlets
- ★ Prestige Format
- Graphic Novel
- ▢ Collected Edition
- ▲ Suggested for Mature Readers

PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER, DC COMICS

NEW YORK CITY.

THREE WEEKS PAST.





HE'S
DEAD

A G E N T S

ANDREW
HELPER
WORDS


KYLE
BAKER
PICTURES

A LESSON IN REVISIONIST HISTORY BY:
TIM
HARRIS
LETTERS

TOM
ZILKO
COLORS

RENEE
WITTEBARGER
ASSISTANT EDITOR

MIKE
CARLIN
EDITOR

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ROLL
IT!!

THIS WEEK, WE TAKE A LOOK
AT THE RECENTLY DECEASED
FIGURE KNOWN AS
THE SHADOW--

LIVES OF THE FRESHLY DEAD

--AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE
SEEMINGLY ENDLESS WAR
ON CRIME AND ITS DENIZENS
HAS SPANNED OVER FIFTY
YEARS.

WHO WAS THIS
MYSTERY-SHROUDED
CREATURE OF
THE NIGHT?

WHERE DID HE COME FROM-- AND WHY?

IT BEGINS IN CHICAGO,
1930... A TEAM OF CAPONE-
PROTECTED JEWEL THIEVES
ARE FOUND MURDERED.

THE FRUITS OF
THEIR LABORS LIE
SCATTERED ACROSS
THE ALLEY.

POLICE ON
THE SCENE ARE
QUESTIONED
BY THE PRESS...

BUT THE GANGSTER-
OWNED AUTHORITIES
OFFER LITTLE
INFORMATION.

THE UNEXPLAINED
CRIMINAL KILLINGS
CONTINUE-- MOVING
FIRST FROM CITY TO
CITY-- THEN ACROSS
THE GLOBE...

IN LENINGRAD,
1934...

OAXACA,
1935...

AND BACK TO AMERICA--
IN SAN FRANCISCO'S
CHINATOWN DISTRICT...

EVERYWHERE THE
ANSWER IS THE SAME...
NO ONE SEES ANYTHING...

-- AND YET, THERE
ARE SOME WHO
HINT OTHERWISE...

IN 1940, A NEWSREEL CREW TRACKS DOWN CLIVE BURKE, REPORTER FOR THE NOW DEFUNCT "NEW YORK CHRONICLE..."

BURKE'S MANY CRIME STORIES SUGGEST HE HAS A DIRECT LINK WITH THE SHADOW...

BUT WHEN QUESTIONED, HIS REMARKS ARE CHILLING...

MEBBE I DO BUMP INNA HIM NOW AN' THEN--hic--YOU DON' WATCH YERSELF MIGHTER, YOU'RE LIABLE TA BUMP INNA HIM TOO...!

JOSEPH CARDONA, THEN NEW YORK'S YOUNGEST POLICE INSPECTOR, OFFERS LITTLE INFORMATION...

WELL, YOU'LL--
UH--HAVE TO TALK TO--
UM--THE COMMISSIONER ABOUT THAT--

--BUT LEADS THE NEWSREEL TEAM TO COMMISSIONER WESTON, WHO RESPONDS TO CHARGES THAT A FULL HALF OF THE CITY'S MOST VICIOUS CRIMINALS WERE APPREHENDED BY THE SHADOW...

WHY, YES, IT'S--ahem--TRUE, THAT THE SHADOW... ASSISTS US, FROM TIME TO TIME...

BUT, AHH... WE KNOW NOTHING ABOUT HIM--BEYOND THE... UM!... MINOR SERVICES HE PERFORMS...

THE 1940 NEWSREEL PROJECT IS EVENTUALLY SHELVED FOR LACK OF INFORMATION.

BUT, WE AT "LIVES OF THE FRESHLY DEAD" MANAGED TO UNEARTH RARE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SHADOW IN ACTION...

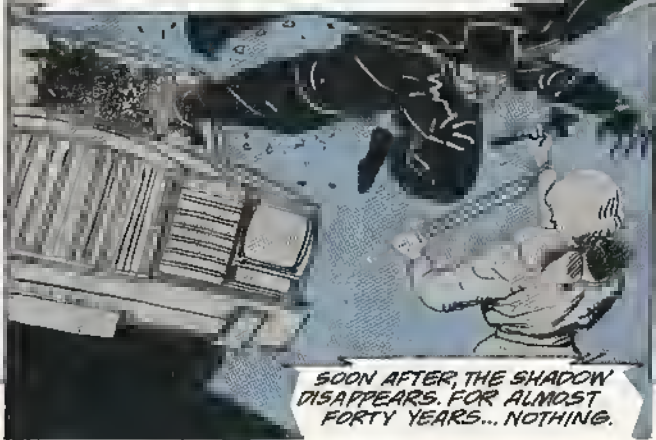
THESE CANDID SHOTS DATING FROM 1935 TO 1945, WERE DISCOVERED AMONG THE PERSONAL EFFECTS OF CLIVE BURKE--

ALL FEATURE THE SHADOW COMMITTING ACTS OF UNSPEAKABLE VIOLENCE--AND PROVIDE INDISPUTABLE PROOF OF THE LINK BETWEEN BURKE AND THE SHADOW.

ANY OF THESE PHOTOS WOULD HAVE EARNED CLIVE BURKE THE PULITZER PRIZE FOR PHOTO JOURNALISM... YET, ALL REMAINED UNPUBLISHED UNTIL NOW.

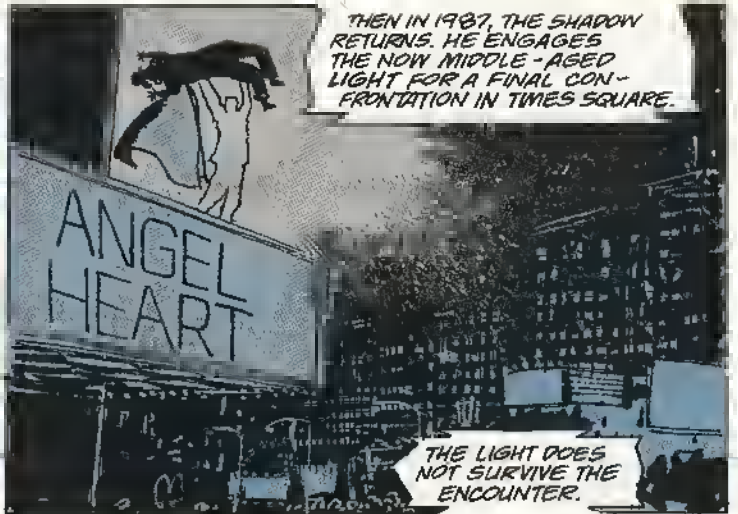
WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE AS TO THE REASON WHY.

IN 1949, THE SHADOW IS FINALLY CAPTURED ON FILM, AS HE SMASHES A NEO-NAZI CULT LED BY A CHILD EVANGELIST CALLED THE LIGHT.

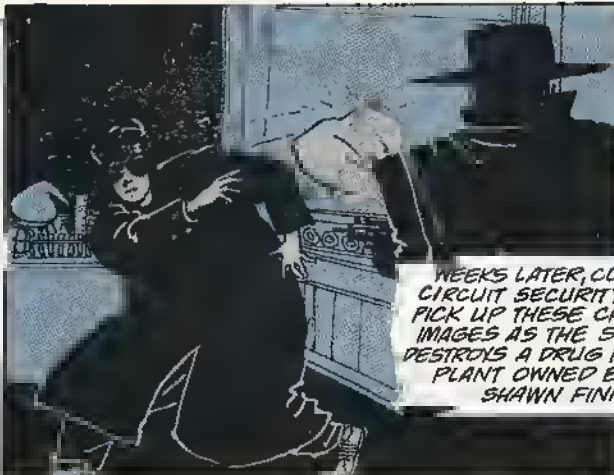


SOON AFTER, THE SHADOW DISAPPEARS. FOR ALMOST FORTY YEARS... NOTHING.

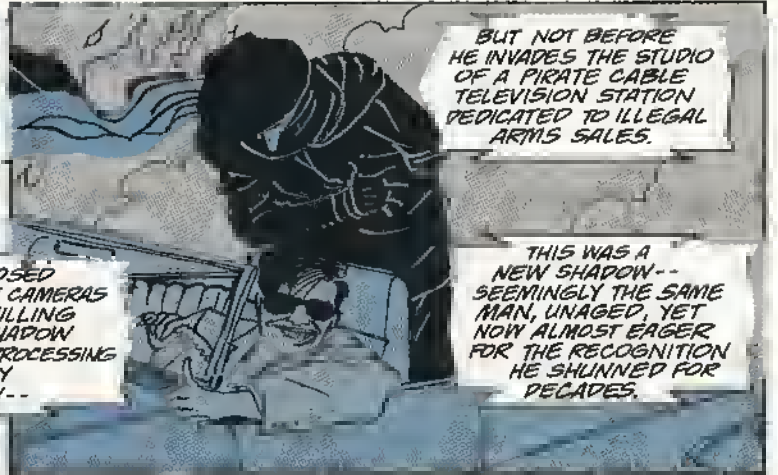
THEN IN 1987, THE SHADOW RETURNS. HE ENGAGES THE NOW MIDDLE-AGED LIGHT FOR A FINAL CONFRONTATION IN TIMES SQUARE.



THE LIGHT DOES NOT SURVIVE THE ENCOUNTER.



WEEKS LATER, CLOSED CIRCUIT SECURITY CAMERAS PICK UP THESE CHILLING IMAGES AS THE SHADOW DESTROYS A DRUG PROCESSING PLANT OWNED BY SHAWN FINN--



BUT NOT BEFORE HE INVADERS THE STUDIO OF A PIRATE CABLE TELEVISION STATION DEDICATED TO ILLEGAL ARMS SALES.

THIS WAS A NEW SHADOW-- SEEMINGLY THE SAME MAN, UNAGED, YET NOW ALMOST EAGER FOR THE RECOGNITION HE SHUNNED FOR DECADES.

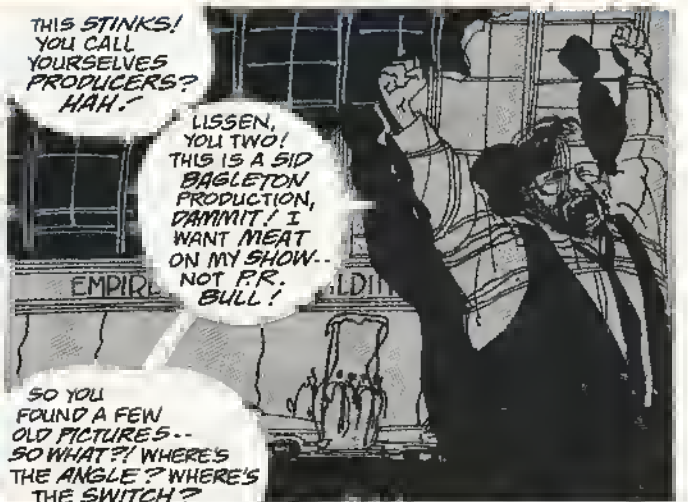
PERHAPS IT WAS THIS VERY BOLDNESS THAT CUT SHORT THE SHADOW'S RETURN... PERHAPS HE WAS UNPREPARED TO DEAL WITH MAN'S NEWEST WEAPONS... BUT WHATEVER THE REASON, THE SHADOW IS DE-



THIS STINKS! YOU CALL YOURSELVES PRODUCERS? HAH--

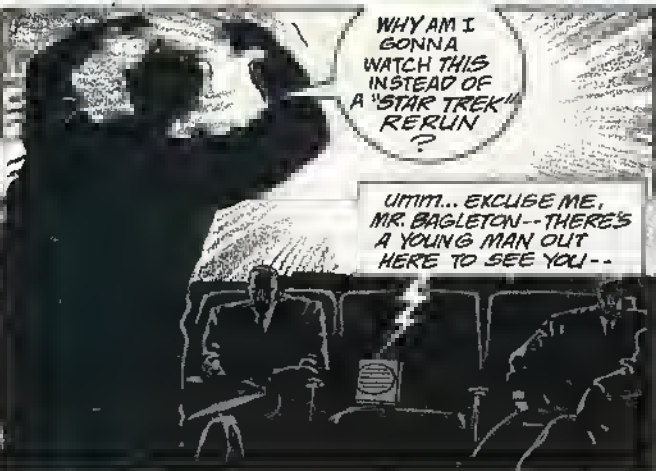
LISSEN, YOU TWO! THIS IS A SID BAGLETON PRODUCTION, DAMMIT! I WANT MEAT ON MY SHOW-- NOT P.R. BULL!

SO YOU FOUND A FEW OLD PICTURES-- SO WHAT?! WHERE'S THE ANGLE? WHERE'S THE SWITCH?



WHY AM I GONNA WATCH THIS INSTEAD OF A "STAR TREK" RERUN?

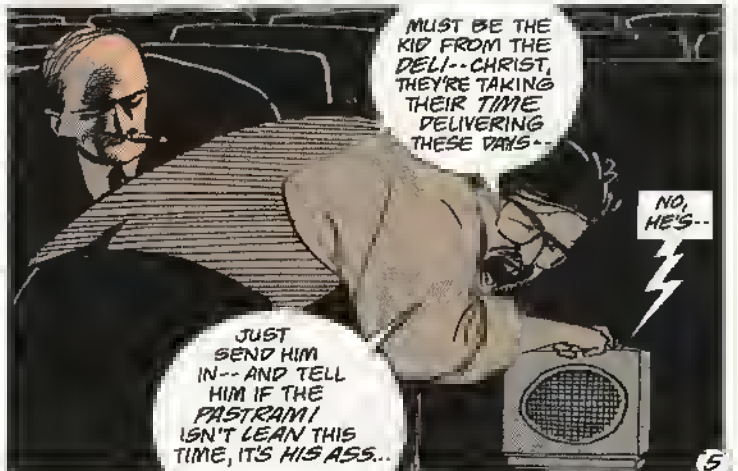
UMMM... EXCUSE ME, MR. BAGLETON-- THERE'S A YOUNG MAN OUT HERE TO SEE YOU--

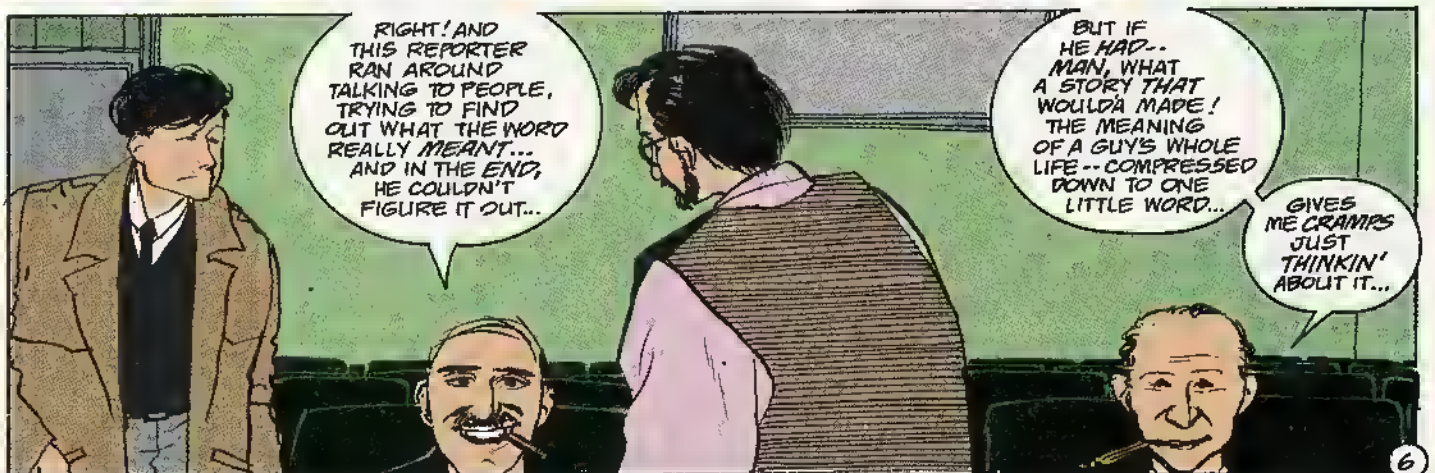
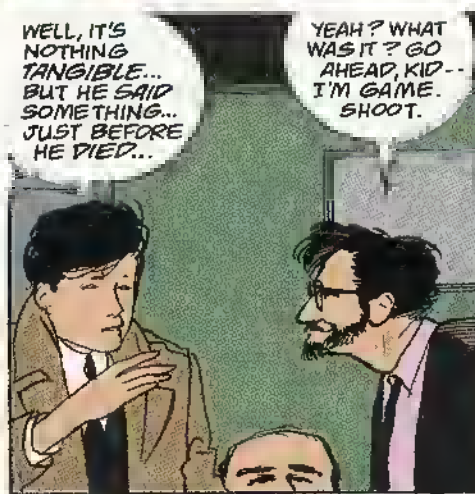
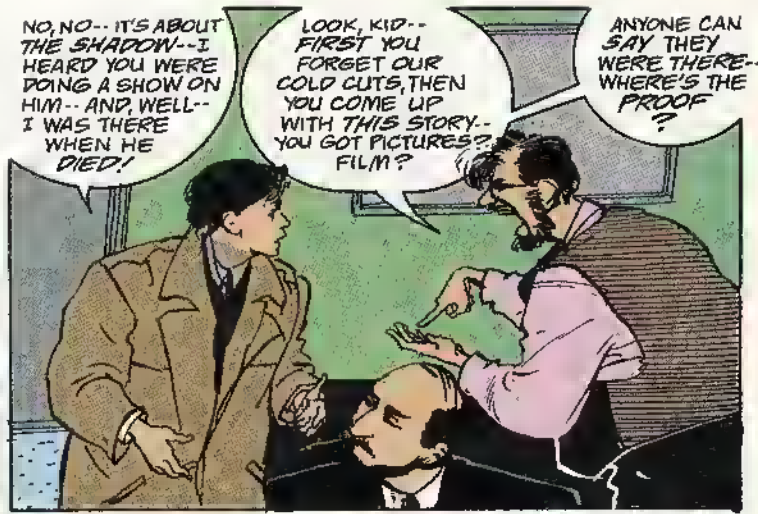
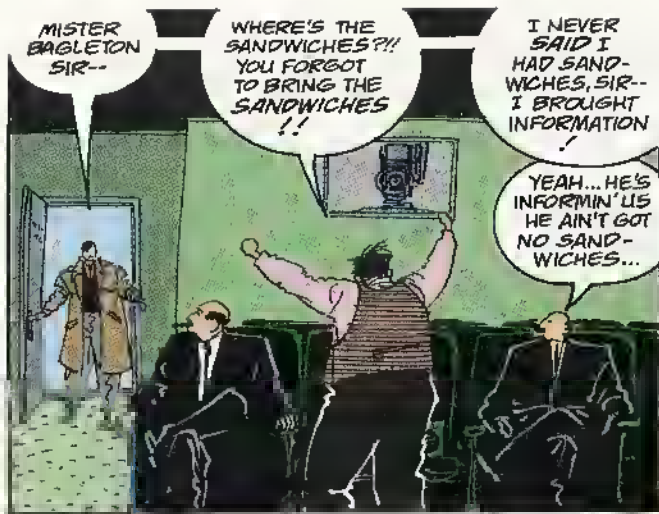


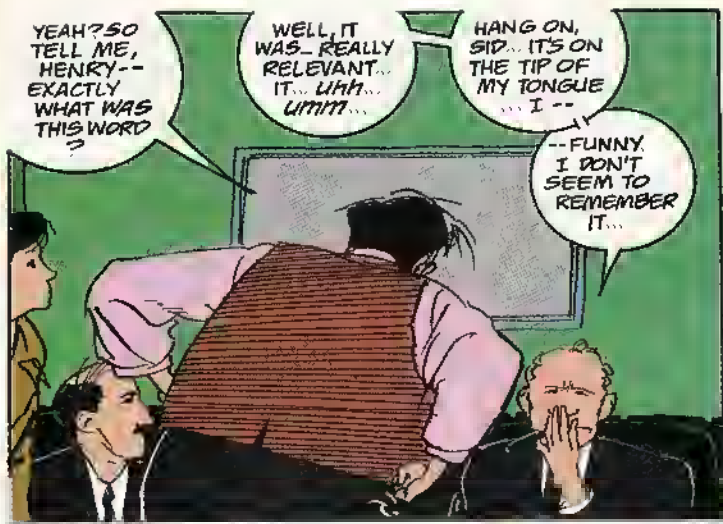
MUST BE THE KID FROM THE DELI-- CHRIST, THEY'RE TAKING THEIR TIME DELIVERING THESE DAYS--

NO, HE'S--

JUST SEND HIM IN-- AND TELL HIM IF THE PASTRAMI ISN'T LEAN THIS TIME, IT'S HIS ASS...





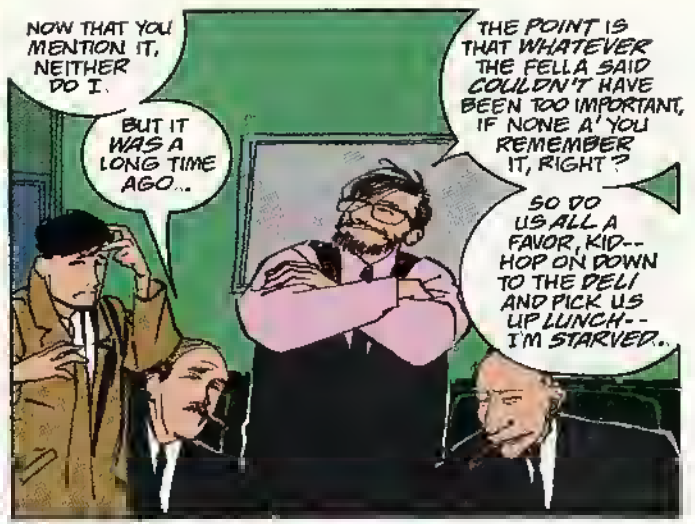


YEAH? SO
TELL ME,
HENRY--
EXACTLY
WHAT WAS
THIS WORD?

WELL, IT
WAS... REALLY
RELEVANT...
IT... UHH...
UHH...

HANG ON,
SID... IT'S ON
THE TIP OF
MY TONGUE
... I --

-- FUNNY
I DON'T
SEEM TO
REMEMBER
IT...

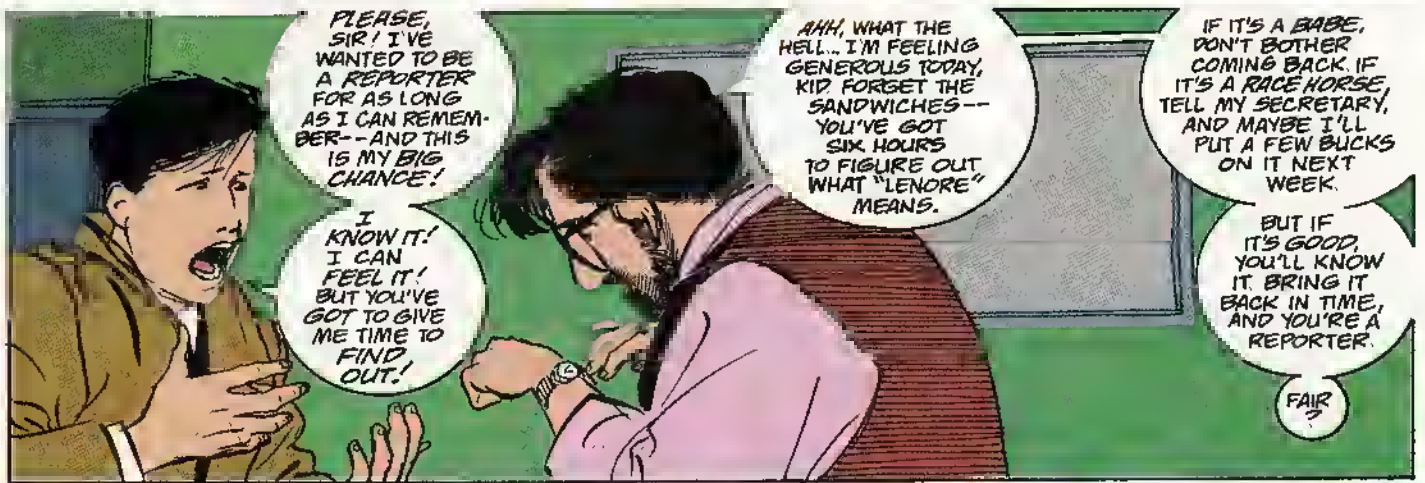


NOW THAT YOU
MENTION IT,
NEITHER
DO I.

BUT IT
WAS A
LONG TIME
AGO...

THE POINT IS
THAT WHATEVER
THE FELLA SAID
COULDN'T HAVE
BEEN TOO IMPORTANT,
IF NONE A' YOU
REMEMBER
IT, RIGHT?

SO DO
US ALL A
FAVOR, KID--
HOP ON DOWN
TO THE DELI
AND PICK US
UP LUNCH--
I'M STARVED..



PLEASE,
SIR! I'VE
WANTED TO BE
A REPORTER
FOR AS LONG
AS I CAN REMEM-
BER-- AND THIS
IS MY BIG
CHANCE!

I KNOW IT!
I CAN
FEEL IT!
BUT YOU'VE
GOT TO GIVE
ME TIME TO
FIND OUT!

AHH, WHAT THE
HELL... I'M FEELING
GENEROUS TODAY,
KID. FORGET THE
SANDWICHES--
YOU'VE GOT
SIX HOURS
TO FIGURE OUT
WHAT "LENORE"
MEANS.

IF IT'S A BABE,
DON'T BOTHER
COMING BACK. IF
IT'S A RACE HORSE,
TELL MY SECRETARY,
AND MAYBE I'LL
PUT A FEW BUCKS
ON IT NEXT
WEEK.

BUT IF
IT'S GOOD,
YOU'LL KNOW
IT. BRING IT
BACK IN TIME,
AND YOU'RE A
REPORTER.

FAIR?



YOU BET!
YOU WON'T
REGRET THIS!
I SWEAR
YOU
WONT!

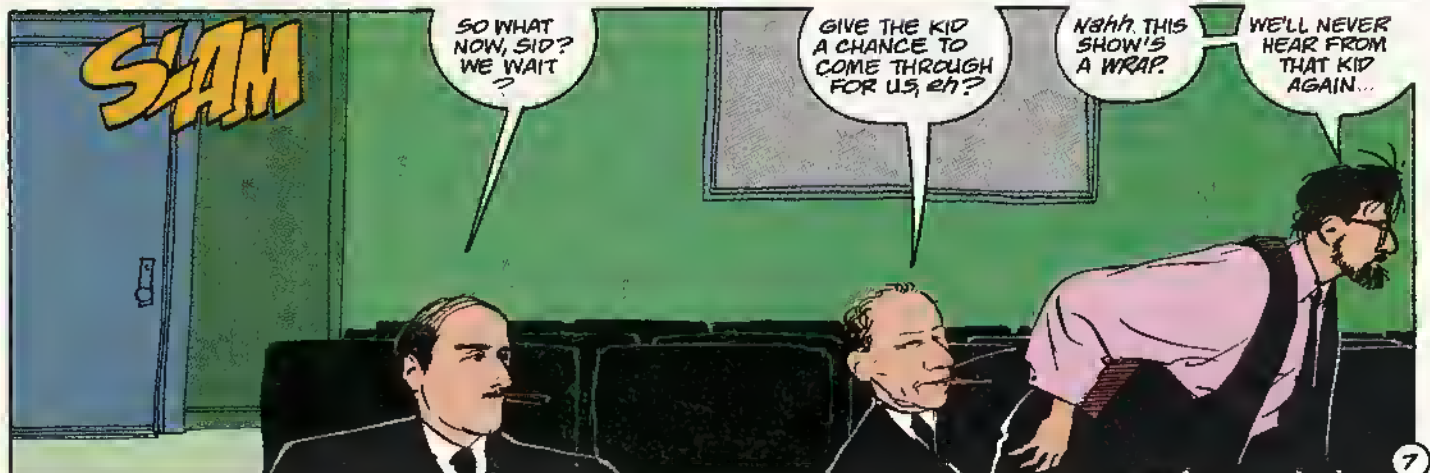
ALL RIGHT,
ALREADY!
JUST GET
GOING! THE
METER'S
RUNNING!



YES, SIR!
JUST YOU
WAIT! YOU'LL
GET AN
EMMY FOR
THIS ONE,
SIR!

NICE
BOY.

LITTLE
PUSHY, IF
YOU ASK
ME...



SLAM

SO WHAT
NOW, SID?
WE WAIT?

GIVE THE KID
A CHANCE TO
COME THROUGH
FOR US, EH?

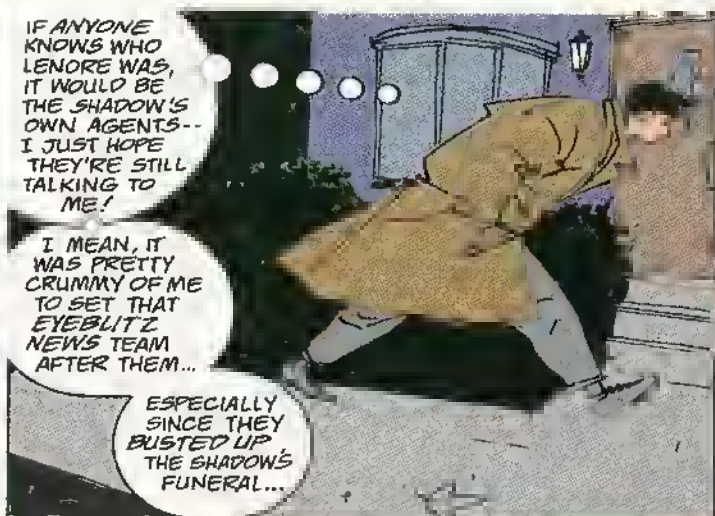
NAAA, THIS
SHOW'S
A WRAP.

WE'LL NEVER
HEAR FROM
THAT KID
AGAIN...



"...I CAN SPOT A LOSER A MILE OFF..."

GREAT. NOW I HAVE A BUYER FOR MY STORY... ALL I HAVE TO DO IS GET THE DARN THING...



IF ANYONE KNOWS WHO LENORE WAS, IT WOULD BE THE SHADOW'S OWN AGENTS... I JUST HOPE THEY'RE STILL TALKING TO ME!

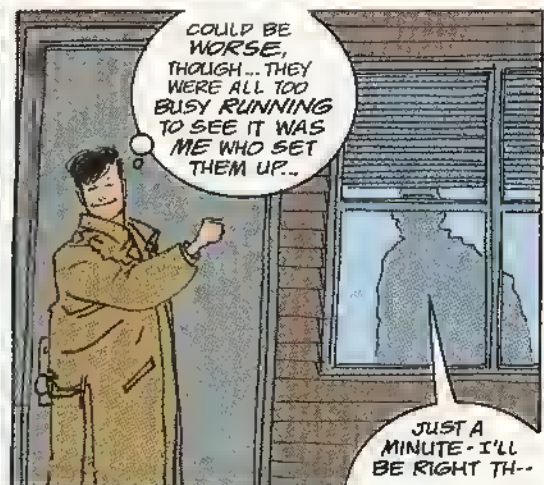
I MEAN, IT WAS PRETTY CRUMMY OF ME TO SET THAT EYEBLITZ NEWS TEAM AFTER THEM...

ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY BUSTED UP THE SHADOW'S FUNERAL...



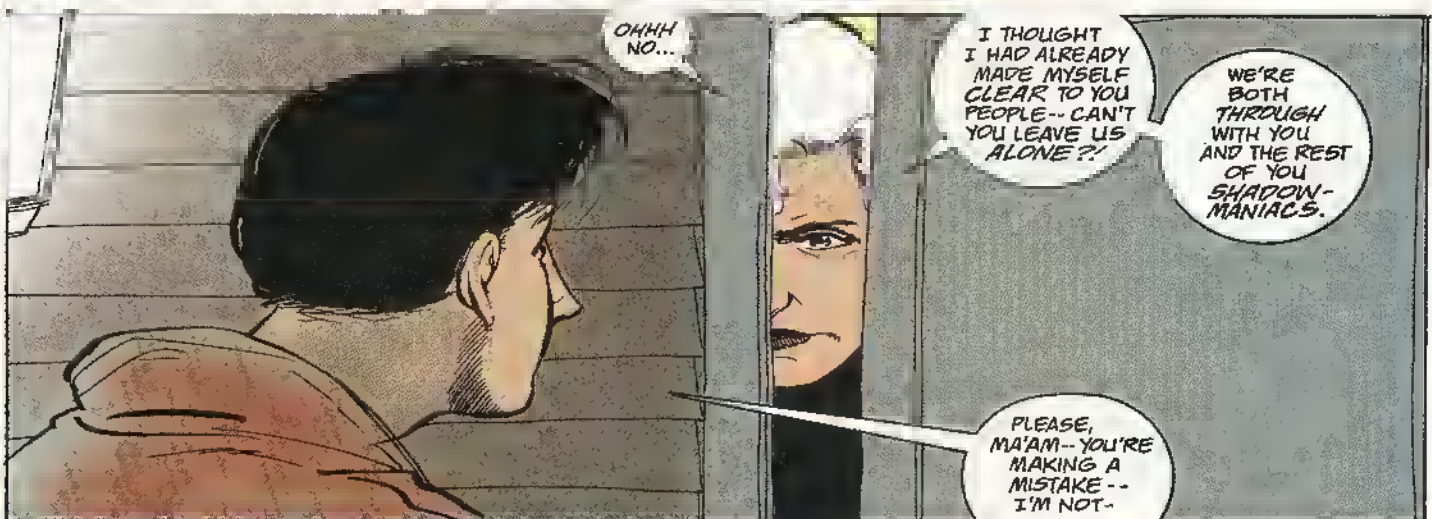
GUESS I MADE A MISTAKE THERE-- THE AGENTS TOOK ME IN AS ONE OF THEIR OWN, AND HOW DID I REPAY THEM? BY TURNING THEM IN!

A MAN DOESN'T DO THAT TO HIS FRIENDS-- FOR ANYTHING LESS THAN A LONG-TERM NETWORK CONTRACT...



COULD BE WORSE, THOUGH... THEY WERE ALL TOO BUSY RUNNING TO SEE IT WAS ME WHO SET THEM UP...

JUST A MINUTE-- I'LL BE RIGHT TH--



OHHH NO...

I THOUGHT I HAD ALREADY MADE MYSELF CLEAR TO YOU PEOPLE-- CAN'T YOU LEAVE US ALONE?!

WE'RE BOTH THROUGH WITH YOU AND THE REST OF YOU SHADOW-MANIACS.

PLEASE, MA'AM-- YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE-- I'M NOT--



WHO IS IT, MARGO?

NO ONE IMPORTANT, HARRY--

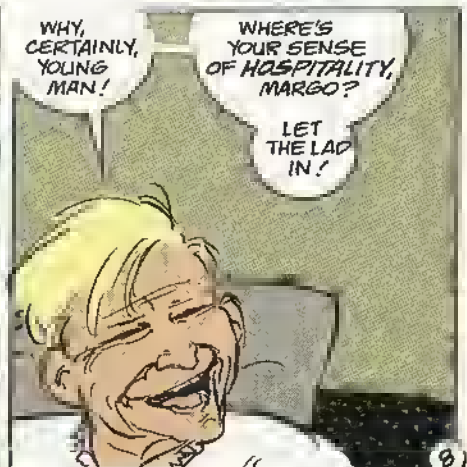
IT'S ME MISTER VINCENT-- YOU REMEMBER-- RUPERT TOME?

MIND IF I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU?

WHY, CERTAINLY, YOUNG MAN!

WHERE'S YOUR SENSE OF HOSPITALITY, MARGO?

LET THE LAD IN!



**SOMEONE WILL DIE BECAUSE
THE JOKER™ WANTS REVENGE.
BUT YOU CAN PREVENT IT.**



**BATMAN® 426 AND 427.
BOTH ON SALE IN SEPTEMBER.**



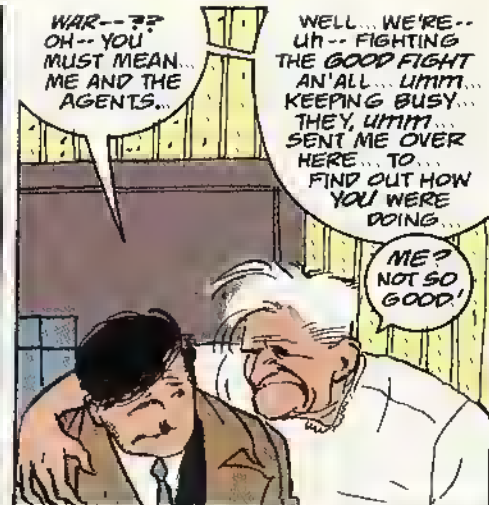


DOC-- DO YOU THINK I SHOULD --?

WELL... HARRY'S CONDITION SEEMS TO HAVE STABILIZED-- I SUPPOSE IT CANNOT HURT--

THAT'S IT, SON-- COME ON IN-- BY GUM, YOU'RE A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!

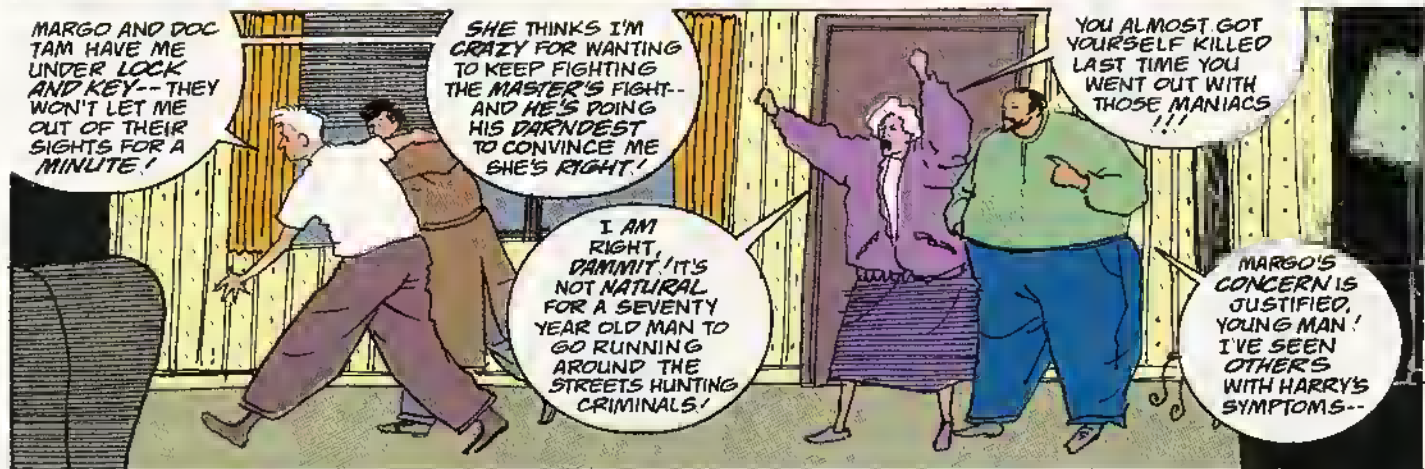
SO TELL ME-- HOW GOES THE WAR?



WAR--?? OH-- YOU MUST MEAN... ME AND THE AGENTS...

WELL... WE'RE-- UH-- FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT AN' ALL... UH... KEEPING BUSY... THEY, UH... SENT ME OVER HERE... TO FIND OUT HOW YOU WERE DOING...

ME? NOT SO GOOD!



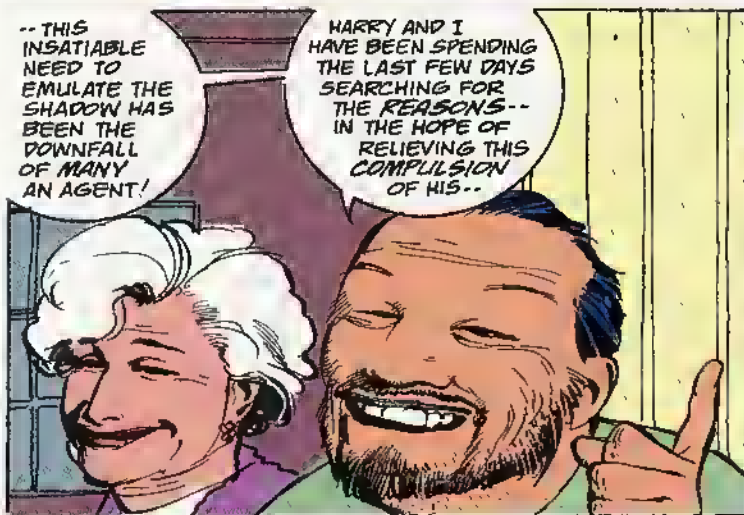
MARGO AND DOC TALK HAVE ME UNDER LOCK AND KEY-- THEY WON'T LET ME OUT OF THEIR SIGHTS FOR A MINUTE!

SHE THINKS I'M CRAZY FOR WANTING TO KEEP FIGHTING THE MASTER'S FIGHT-- AND HE'S DOING HIS DARNDDEST TO CONVINCE ME SHE'S RIGHT!

I AM RIGHT, DAMNIT! IT'S NOT NATURAL FOR A SEVENTY YEAR OLD MAN TO GO RUNNING AROUND THE STREETS HUNTING CRIMINALS!

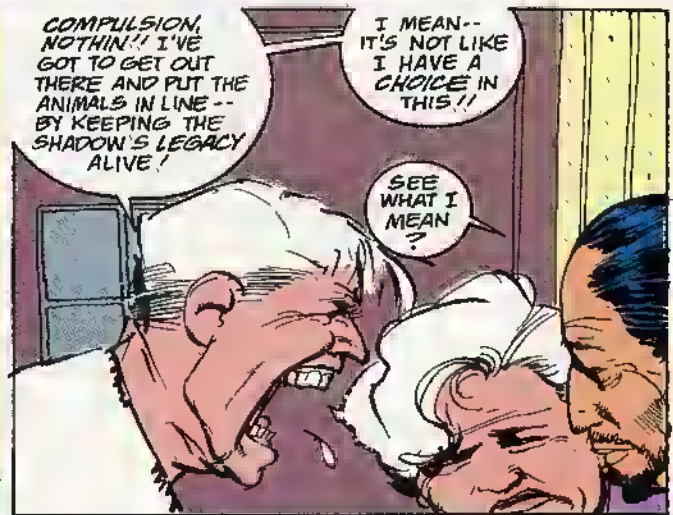
YOU ALMOST GOT YOURSELF KILLED LAST TIME YOU WENT OUT WITH THOSE MANIACS!!!

MARGO'S CONCERN IS JUSTIFIED, YOUNG MAN! I'VE SEEN OTHERS WITH HARRY'S SYMPTOMS--



-- THIS INSATIABLE NEED TO EMULATE THE SHADOW HAS BEEN THE DOWNFALL OF MANY AN AGENT!

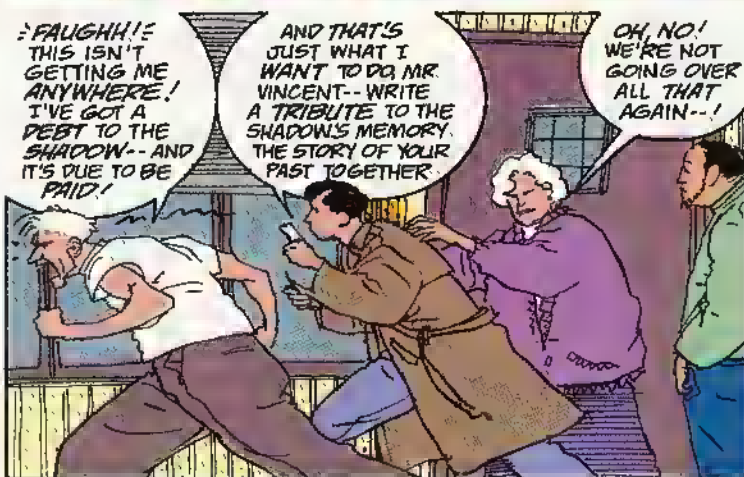
HARRY AND I HAVE BEEN SPENDING THE LAST FEW DAYS SEARCHING FOR THE REASONS-- IN THE HOPE OF RELIEVING THIS COMPULSION OF HIS--



COMPULSION, NOTHIN'! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT THERE AND PUT THE ANIMALS IN LINE -- BY KEEPING THE SHADOW'S LEGACY ALIVE!

I MEAN-- IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE A CHOICE IN THIS!!

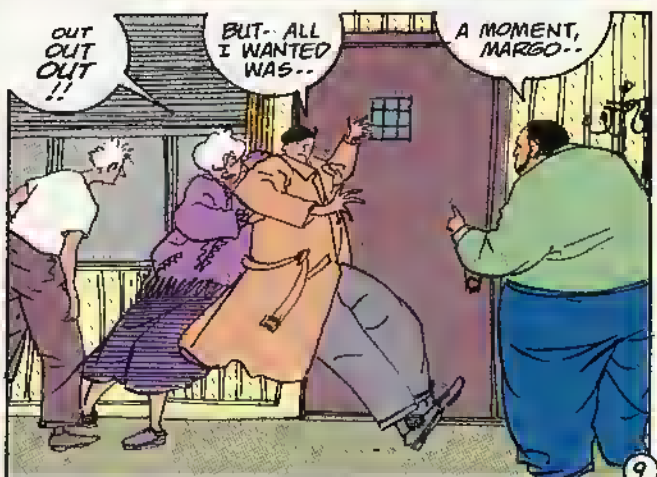
SEE WHAT I MEAN?



!FAUGH!! THIS ISN'T GETTING ME ANYWHERE! I'VE GOT A DEBT TO THE SHADOW-- AND IT'S DUE TO BE PAID!

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT I WANT TO DO MR VINCENT-- WRITE A TRIBUTE TO THE SHADOW'S MEMORY. THE STORY OF YOUR PAST TOGETHER

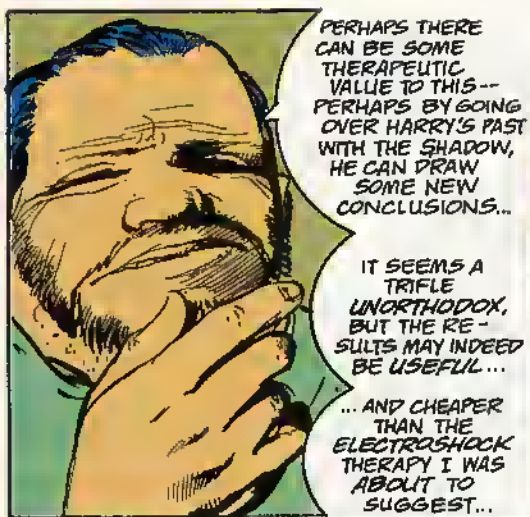
OH, NO! WE'RE NOT GOING OVER ALL THAT AGAIN--!



OUT OUT OUT!!

BUT-- ALL I WANTED WAS--

A MOMENT, MARGO--



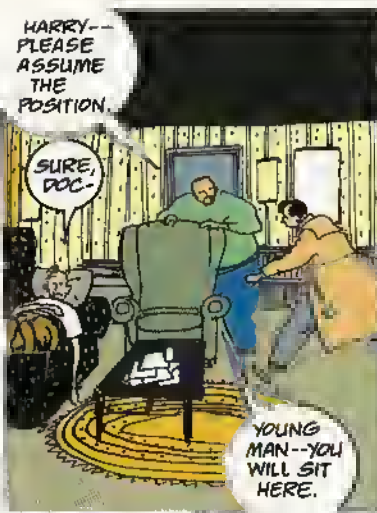
PERHAPS THERE CAN BE SOME THERAPEUTIC VALUE TO THIS-- PERHAPS BY GOING OVER HARRY'S PAST WITH THE SHADOW, HE CAN DRAW SOME NEW CONCLUSIONS...

IT SEEMS A TRIFLE UNORTHODOX, BUT THE RESULTS MAY INDEED BE USEFUL...

... AND CHEAPER THAN THE ELECTROSHOCK THERAPY I WAS ABOUT TO SUGGEST...

HARRY-- PLEASE ASSUME THE POSITION.

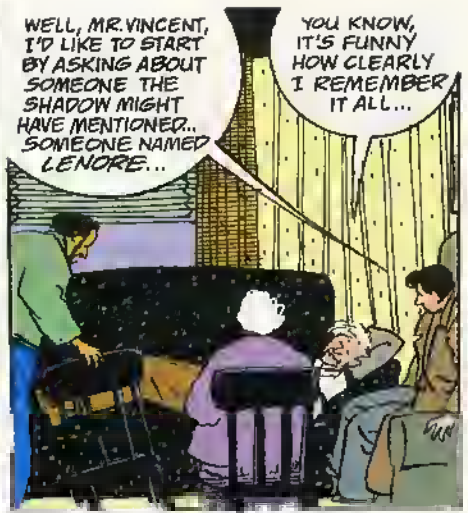
SURE, DOC.



YOUNG MAN--YOU WILL SIT HERE.

WELL, MR. VINCENT, I'D LIKE TO START BY ASKING ABOUT SOMEONE THE SHADOW MIGHT HAVE MENTIONED.. SOMEONE NAMED LENORE...

YOU KNOW, IT'S FUNNY HOW CLEARLY I REMEMBER IT ALL...

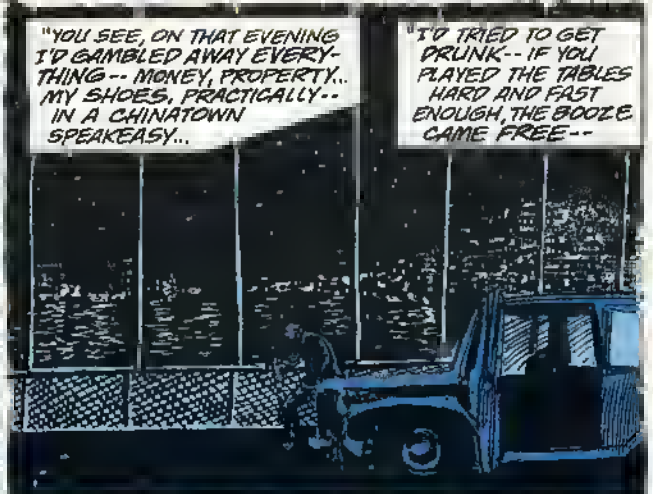


"... ESPECIALLY SINCE I WAS TOTALLY SOAKED WHEN IT HAPPENED..."

"IT WAS BACK IN '31... I WAS A YOUNG MAN WHO'D MADE MORE THAN HIS SHARE OF BIG MISTAKES..."

"... MISTAKES THAT WERE RAPIDLY CATCHING UP TO ME."

SCREEEE



"YOU SEE, ON THAT EVENING I'D GAMBLLED AWAY EVERYTHING-- MONEY, PROPERTY.. MY SHOES, PRACTICALLY-- IN A CHINATOWN SPEAKEASY..."

"I'D TRIED TO GET DRUNK-- IF YOU PLAYED THE TABLES HARD AND FAST ENOUGH, THE BOOZE CAME FREE--"



"... BUT IT ONLY MADE ME SICK AS A DOG."

"AS I HEAVED MY GUTS UP AND OVER THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE, THE SOLUTION TO MY PROBLEM SUDDENLY HIT ME..."



"I COULD LEAP OFF THE BRIDGE, LAND ON A PASSING STEAMER, AND START OVER AGAIN IN SOME FOREIGN LAND"

"... OR I COULD MISS THE BOAT, HIT THE WATER, AND END MY PROBLEMS FOR GOOD."

"GIVEN MY FRAME OF MIND, IT WASN'T MUCH OF A CHOICE."

"I REMEMBER STANDING THERE, PRAYING THERE WERE NO CRAPS TABLES IN HEAVEN..."

"AND AS MY FOOT LEFT THE RAILING, I FIGURED IT REALLY DIDN'T MATTER-- I WASN'T HEADING IN THAT DIRECTION ANYWAY..."

"BUT THEN--"

AAAACK

JESUS CHRIST! CAN'T A FELLA KILL HIMSELF WITHOUT SOME WHITE KNIGHT COMING ALONG AND--

UHH... NOPE. ONE THING YOU'RE NOT IS A WHITE KNIGHT.

LISTEN, FRIEND-- SORRY TO DISSAPPOINT YOU, BUT I'M FRESH OUT OF CASH. REALLY.

NOW, UHH... WHY DON'T YOU JUST... UH... RUN ALONG AND LET ME... GET ON WITH MY BUSINESS...

WHOOOMP!

I AM NO PETTY THIEF, HARRY VINCENT. MEN CALL ME THE SHADOW.

I HAVE JUST SAVED YOUR LIFE-- FROM NOW ON, IT BELONGS TO ME.

YEAH? WELL, MAYBE I DIDN'T WANT TO BE SAVED.

YOUR CONCERNS DO NOT INTEREST ME. GET IN.

HEY! WAIT A MINUTE! I'VE GOT RIGHTS--

ALL YOU HAVE IS THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT-- AND LISTEN TO MY WORDS.

THERE IS AN EVIL IN THE WORLD, MISTER VINCENT. A LAWLESSNESS THAT GROWS BOLDER WITH EACH PASSING DAY. YOU ARE A CASUALTY OF THAT EVIL, HARRY.

YOU WILL ASSIST ME AS I WAGE WAR AGAINST IT. YOU WILL HAVE YOUR REVENGE-- WHILE I REAP A DIFFERENT KIND OF SATISFACTION.

WHAT KIND OF--

YOU DON'T WANNA KNOW, KID. JUST DO WHAT THE MASTER SAYS. YOU'LL GET USED TO HIM-- EVENTUALLY...

**INVISIBLE! INVINCIBLE! INVULNERABLE!
EXPENDABLE!**

THE

UNKNOWN SOLDIER



**JAMES OWSELEY
PAUL GASCOINE**

**A twelve-issue maxi-
series in DC's New Format.
Beginning in October**





"YEARS LATER I FIGURED OUT HOW THE MEETING ON THE BRIDGE CAME ABOUT. ANYONE WHO'D SEEN ME GAMBLE MY LAST FEW DOLLARS AWAY WOULD HAVE SENSED THIS WAS MY SWAN SONG..."



"BUT ONLY ONE OBSERVER DECIDED TO ACT ON IT-- AND SAVE ME FOR HIMSELF... HE FOLLOWED ME TO THE BRIDGE-- AND KNEW I WAS DESTINED TO BE HIS..."

"WERE THERE ANY WOMEN WITH HIM-- DID YOU GET THEIR NAMES?"

"OK, THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN-- BUT I COULDN'T BE CERTAIN-- NOT AFTER SO MANY YEARS. I HAD OTHER CONCERNS AT THE MOMENT, YOU SEE-- FRANKLY, ONLY ONE FACE STUCK IN MY MIND."



"WE DROVE FROM THE BRIDGE TO MY APARTMENT, WHERE HE TOLD ME TO WAIT FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS."

"POWERLESS TO DO ANYTHING-- BUT END OUR LIVES IN POVERTY AND DESPAIR."

"AS I SAT THERE, I HAD SOME TIME TO MULL IT OVER-- AND THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, THE MORE I FIGURED HE WAS RIGHT."

"IF YOU'D BEEN THERE ON THE BRIDGE-- IF YOU COULD HAVE SEEN HIS FACE-- HIS EYES-- YOU'D KNOW, AS I DID, THAT HE HAD THE POWER."

"I WAS A VICTIM-- AND THERE WERE MILLIONS OF POOR SAPS OUT THERE JUST LIKE ME, POWERLESS TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE CROOKED ROULETTE WHEELS, THE MARKED DECKS, THE LOADED DICE..."

"AND MORE IMPORTANT-- HE WANTED ME TO HAVE A PIECE OF IT."

"WHEN THE PHONE RANG, I WAS READY."



"IT WASN'T THE SHADOW-- I'D REMEMBER HIS VOICE FOREVER-- BUT I SOMEHOW KNEW THAT THIS GALLER WORKED FOR THE MASTER, TOO."

"HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS BURBANK-- AND GAVE ME THE ADDRESS OF A BROWNSTONE IN CHINATOWN. THE SAME PLACE I'D LOST MY FORTUNE EARLIER THAT VERY EVENING."

"HE TOLD ME TO WAIT OUT FRONT FOR A STRANGER-- I'D LEARN MY PART IN THE PLAN THEN."

"WHEN I ARRIVED, THE JOINT WAS STILL JUMPING."

"A FEW MINUTES LATER, THIS FELLA HANDED ME A WAD OF CASH THAT WOULD CHOKE A HORSE."

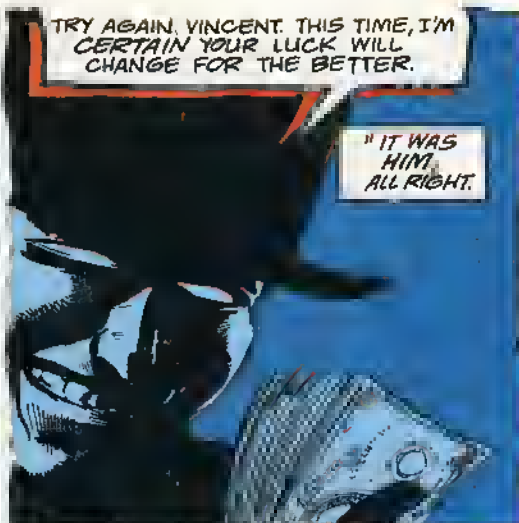
"FOR A SECOND, ALL I COULD SEE WAS THE STAKE. IT MUST'VE BEEN TEN GRAND... MORE THAN ENOUGH TO PUT ME BACK ON MY FEET."

"I WAS THINKING ABOUT GRABBING IT AND TAKING OFF... WHEN THE FELLA SPOKE UP, IN A VOICE THAT CHILLED ME TO THE BONE."



TRY AGAIN, VINCENT. THIS TIME, I'M CERTAIN YOUR LUCK WILL CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.

"IT WAS HIM, ALL RIGHT."



"AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW? HE WAS RIGHT!"

"I DIDN'T KNOW HOW HE DID IT, OR WHY... AND I DIDN'T CARE! FOR THAT NIGHT, I WAS GOLDEN."



WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE, MIKE?

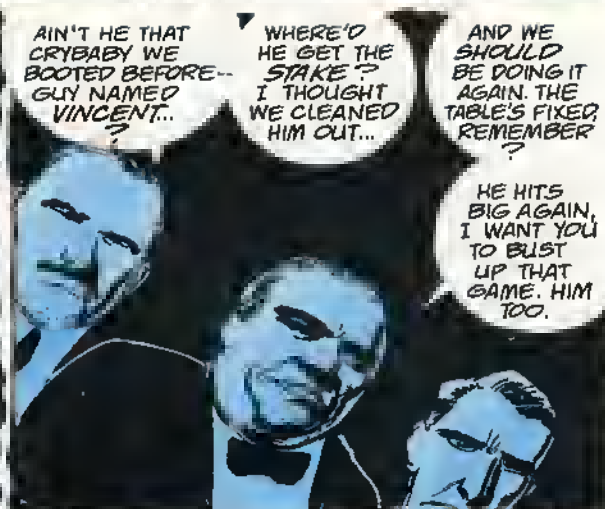
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S ON A STREAK, BART.

AIN'T HE THAT CRYBABY WE BOOTED BEFORE-- GUY NAMED VINCENT...?

WHERE'D HE GET THE STAKE? I THOUGHT WE CLEANED HIM OUT...

AND WE SHOULD BE DOING IT AGAIN. THE TABLE'S FIXED, REMEMBER?

HE HITS BIG AGAIN, I WANT YOU TO BUST UP THAT GAME. HIM TOO.

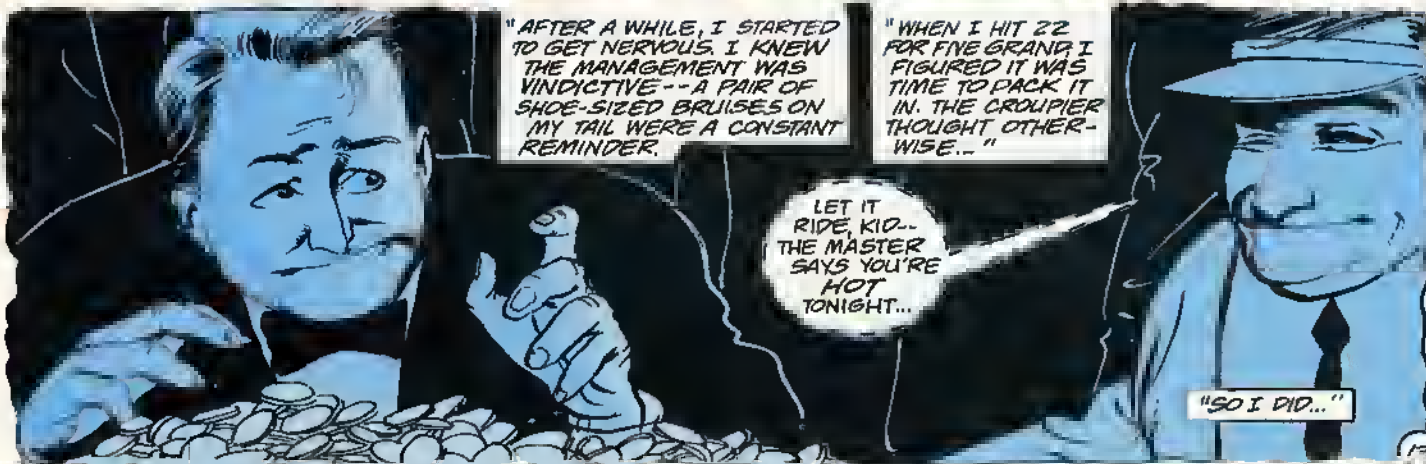


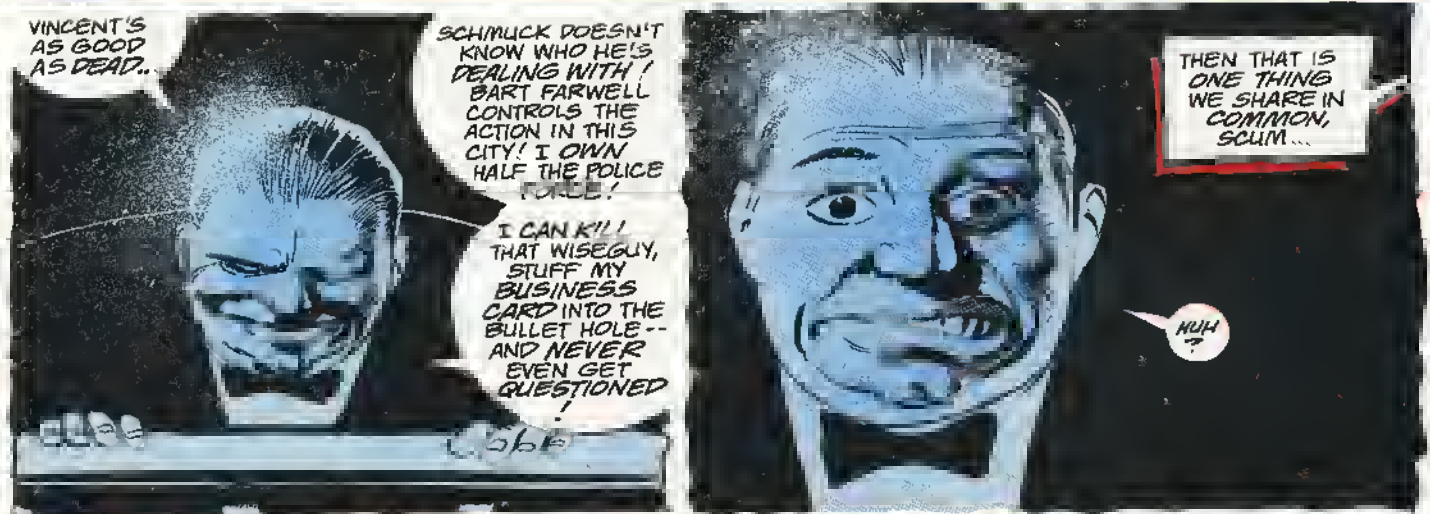
"AFTER A WHILE, I STARTED TO GET NERVOUS. I KNEW THE MANAGEMENT WAS VINDICTIVE-- A PAIR OF SHOE-SIZED BRUISES ON MY TAIL WERE A CONSTANT REMINDER."

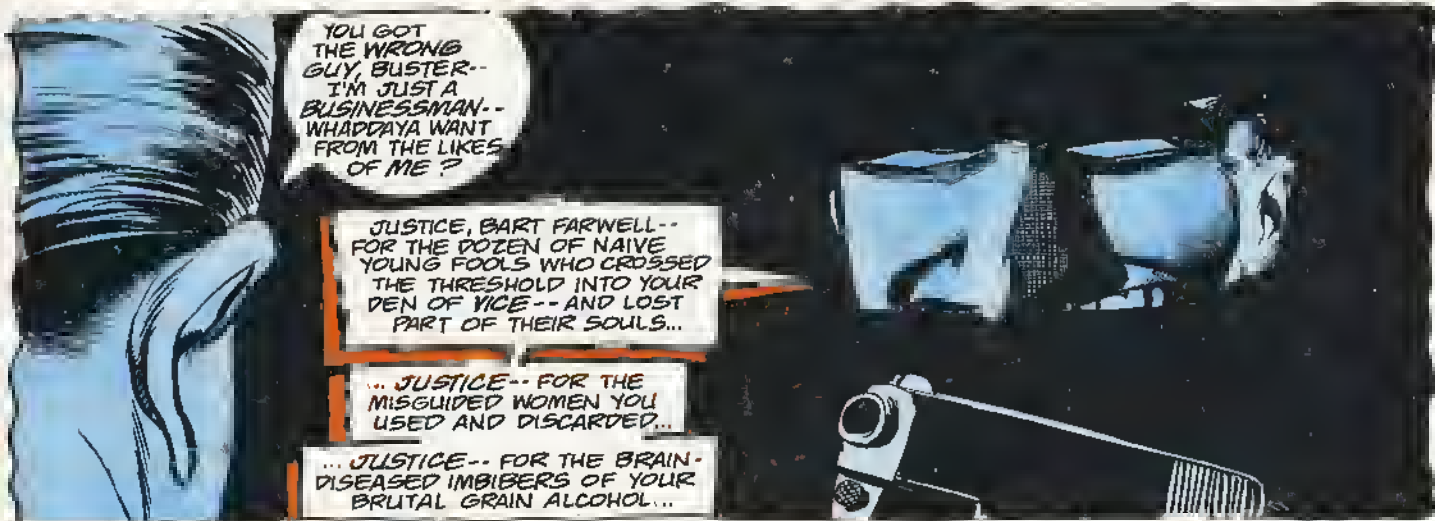
"WHEN I HIT 22 FOR FIVE GRAND I FIGURED IT WAS TIME TO PACK IT IN. THE CROUPIER THOUGHT OTHERWISE..."

LET IT RIDE, KID... THE MASTER SAYS YOU'RE HOT TONIGHT...

"SO I DID..."







YOU GOT
THE WRONG
GUY, BUSTER--
I'M JUST A
BUSINESSMAN--
WHADDAYA WANT
FROM THE LIKES
OF ME?

JUSTICE, BART FARWELL--
FOR THE DOZEN OF NAIVE
YOUNG FOOLS WHO CROSSED
THE THRESHOLD INTO YOUR
DEN OF VICE-- AND LOST
PART OF THEIR SOULS...

... JUSTICE-- FOR THE
MISGUIDED WOMEN YOU
USED AND DISCARDED...

... JUSTICE-- FOR THE BRAIN-
DISEASED IMBIBERS OF YOUR
BRUTAL GRAIN ALCOHOL...



...THEIR SPIRITS CRY
OUT TO ME, BART FARWELL--
AND TELL ME THERE IS
BUT ONE WAY TO
HANDLE YOUR KIND...

H-HEY,
LISSEN--
W-WE CAN
MAKE A
DEAL--

NO DEALS,
FARWELL. I
HAVE NEVER BEEN
PARTIAL TO
CARD GAMES...

... HOWEVER,
I MUST ADMIT A
FONDNESS...
FOR A CERTAIN
VARIETY OF...
ROULETTE...



EVENIN',
HARRY.
LOOKS LIKE
YOU'RE
HAVIN' A
GOOD
NIGHT.

TOO
GOOD.

uhmm...
HI, FELLAS.
I WAS, UM...
GETTING
READY
TO GO--

THAT'S RIGHT,
VINCENT. TOO
BAD YOU AIN'T
GOT TIME TO
PACK A BAG--
'CAUSE YOU'RE
GONNA BE GONE
A LONG TIME...

BOSS
SAYS HE'S
TIRED OF YOUR
GAMES, HARRY.
WANNA KNOW
WHAT HE TOLD
US TO DO TO
YOU?

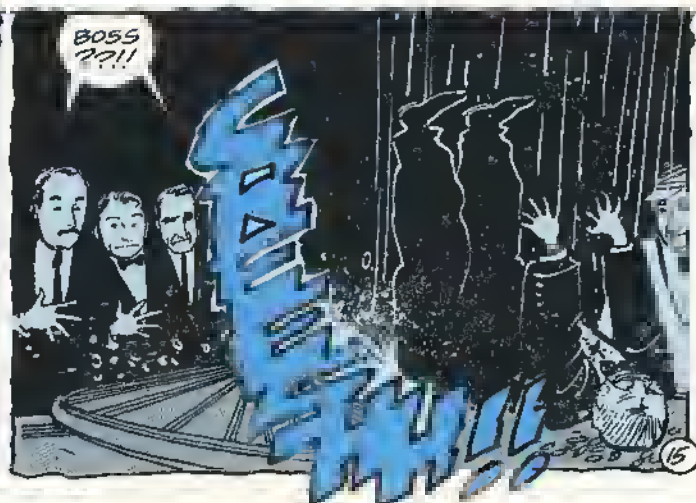
uhmm...
NOT
ESPECIALLY...

FIRST HE SAYS TO
RIP YOUR FINGERNAILS
OUT... THEN BEAT
YOU TO A PULP...
POUR ACID ON
YOUR FACE... AND
END OFF WITH
TWO BULLETS
RIGHT BETWEEN
YOUR...



BANG BANG

EYES--
?



BOSS
??!!

SHIT!!



OHMIGOD!
GUNSHOTS!

SOMEONE'S
BEGUN
KILLED!

I SAW
HIM FALL--
OVER
THERE!

HE'S
BLEEDING
ALL OVER
THOSE--

--CHIPS!



QUIT
PUSHING
!!

MOVE IT!
THE COPS'LL
BE HERE ANY
MINUTE

SCREW
THE COPS--
I'M GETTING
MY MONEY
BACK!



GANGWAY!

ONE
SIDE!
ONE
SIDE!

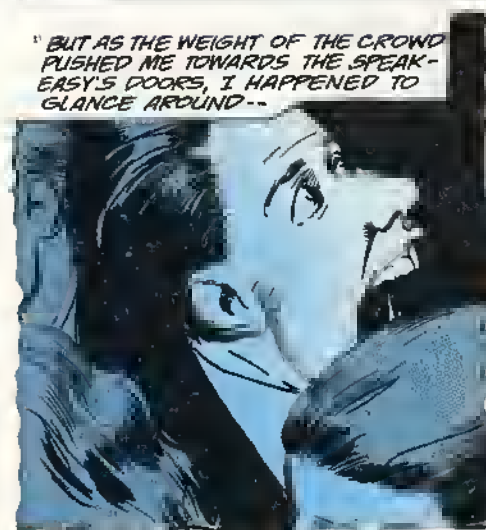
ALL MY
WINNINGS--
GONE! BUT
AT LEAST
I'M STILL
ALIVE!

THE DEAD
GUY-- IT'S
FARWELL--
THE OWNER
OF THE
JOINT!

I DON'T
GET IT!
I WAS
SUPPOSED
TO BE HELPING
THE SHADOW--
BUT ALL I
DID WAS PLAY
THE WHEEL

MAYBE HE WAS
TOO LATE-- MAYBE
SOMEONE ELSE
KILLED FARWELL!
IT WOULD MAKE
SENSE--

-- A MAN
LIKE THAT HAS
GOTTA HAVE LOADS
OF ENEMIES-



"BUT AS THE WEIGHT OF THE CROWD
PUSHED ME TOWARDS THE SPEAK-
EASY'S DOORS, I HAPPENED TO
GLANCE AROUND--



HURRY!

LEMME
OUTTA
HERE!

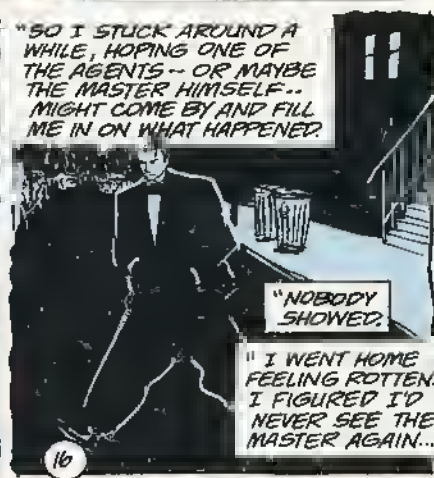
KEEP
MOVING!

"-- AND SAW HIM UP
THERE, ON THE BALCONY..
LOOKING DOWN ON US,
LAUGHING THAT TERRIBLE
LAUGH OF HIS...



"I KNEW THEN THAT HE'D
DONE THE JOB. WHAT I
COULDN'T FIGURE OUT
WAS MY PART IN IT.

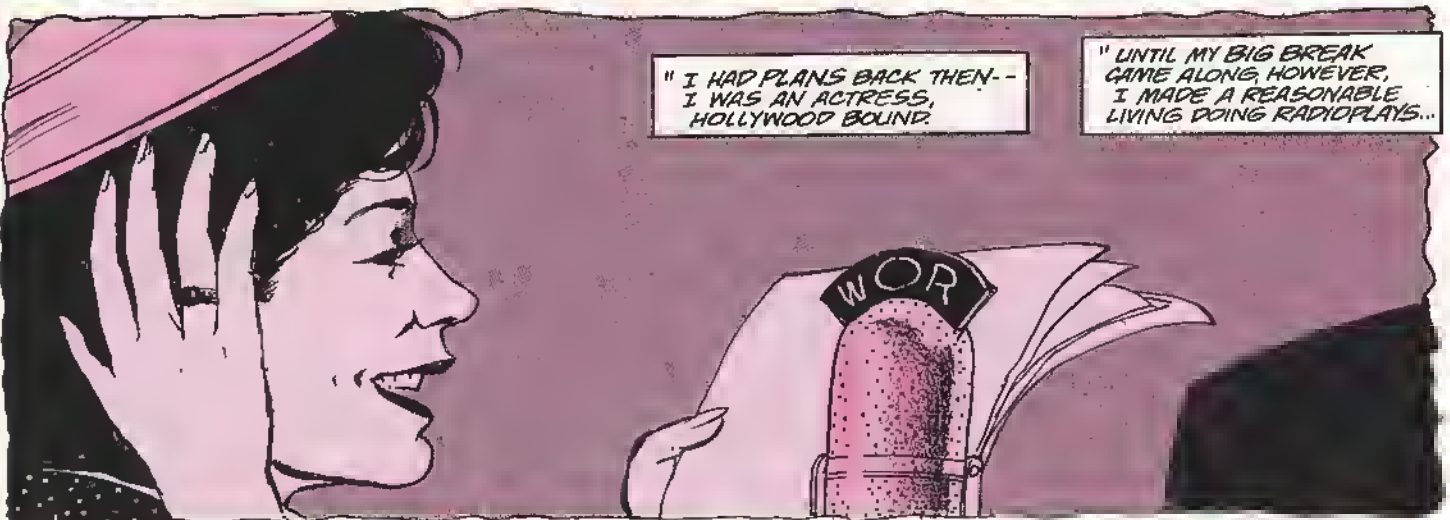
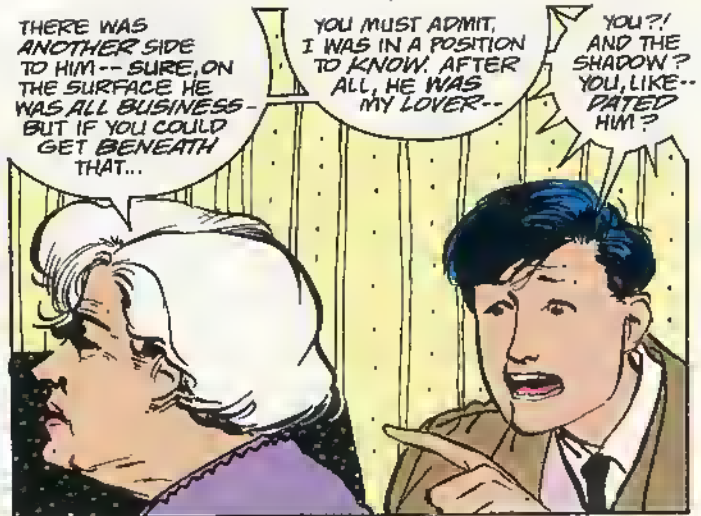
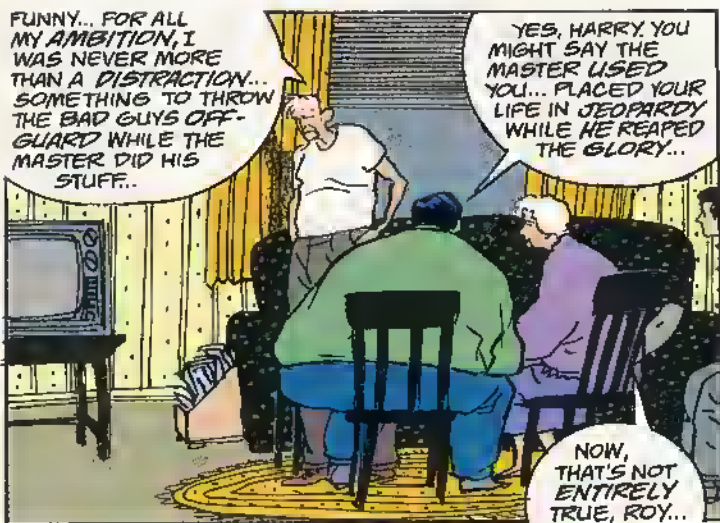
"I WAS STILL THINKING
ABOUT IT AS I SPEWED
OUT ONTO THE STREET
WITH THE MOB.

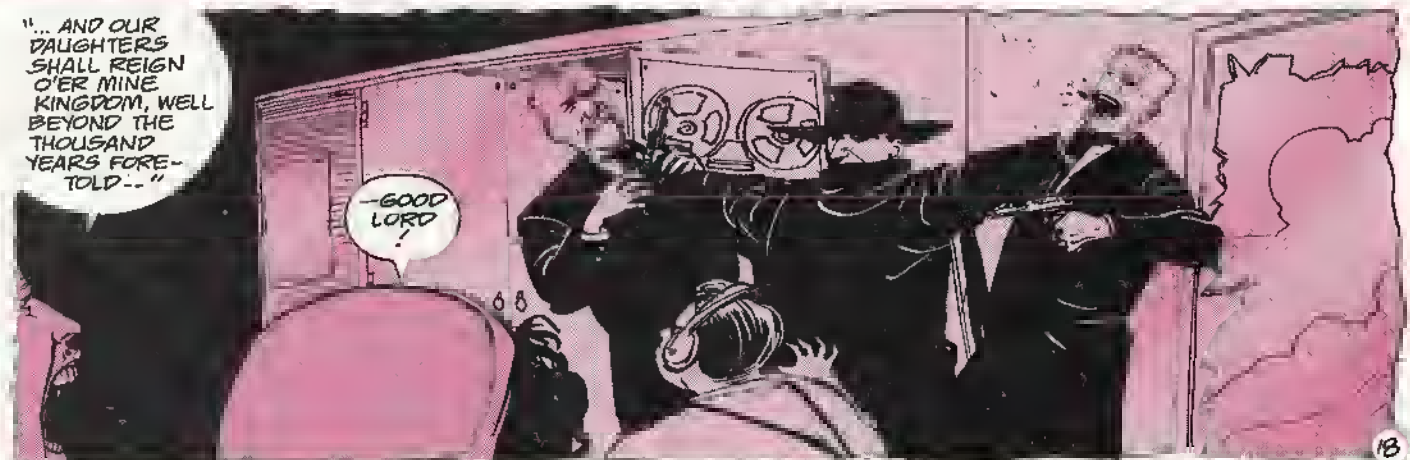
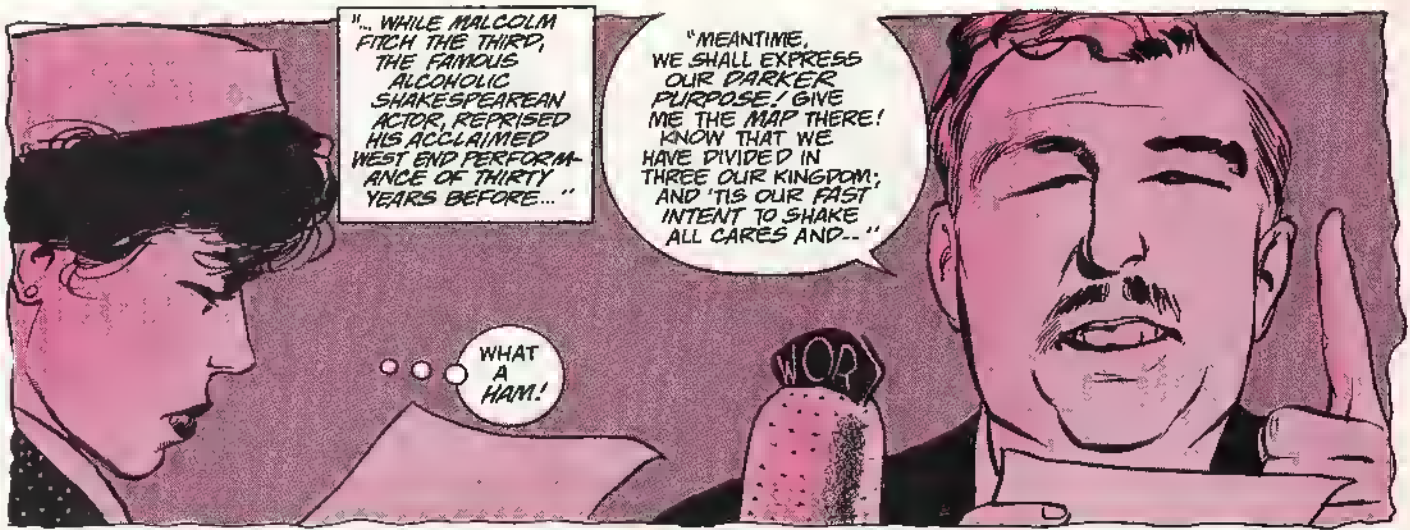


"SO I STUCK AROUND A
WHILE, HOPING ONE OF
THE AGENTS-- OR MAYBE
THE MASTER HIMSELF--
MIGHT COME BY AND FILL
ME IN ON WHAT HAPPENED

"NOBODY
SHOWED.

"I WENT HOME
FEELING ROTTEN.
I FIGURED I'D
NEVER SEE THE
MASTER AGAIN..."



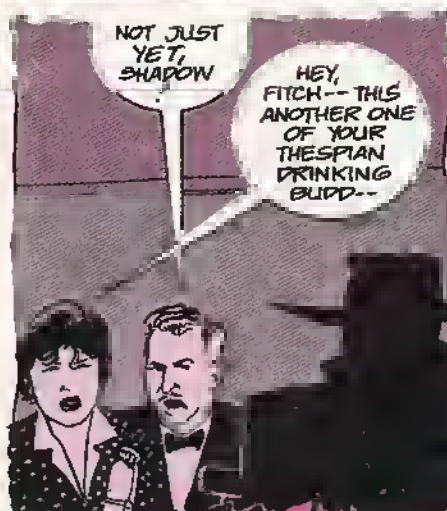




UH...EXCUSE
ME, FAL--
BUT WE'RE
STILL ON
THE AIR!



YOUR PERFORMANCE
IS ABOUT TO CONCLUDE,
FITCH... AS YOU JOIN
YOUR ASSOCIATES
IN HELL!



NOT JUST
YET,
SHADOW

HEY,
FITCH-- THIS
ANOTHER ONE
OF YOUR
THESPIAN
DRINKING
BUDD--



--EEP!

STAND
BACK--
OR THE
FRAULEIN
GETS IT!

GO
AHEAD,
NAZI
SCUM.



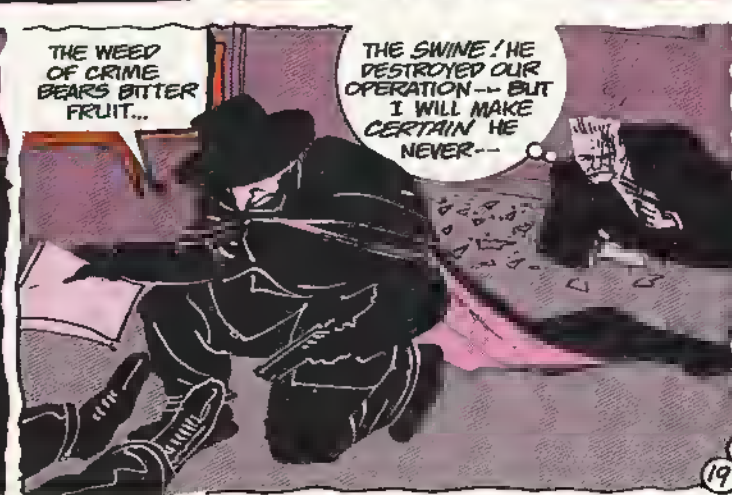
NAZI
SCUM?

I DO NOT KNOW
HOW YOU
DISCOVERED
WE WERE USING
THE RADIO SHOW
TO TRANSMIT
OUR CODE--

--BUT IT'S
A SECRET THAT
WILL DIE WITH YOU
AND MY CO-STAR--

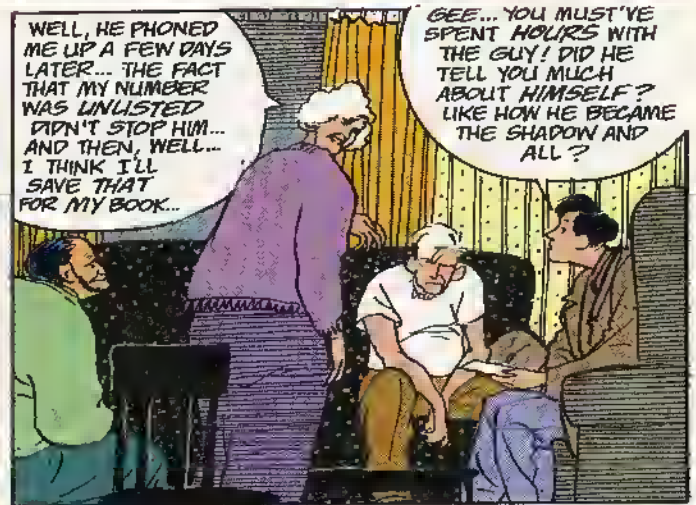
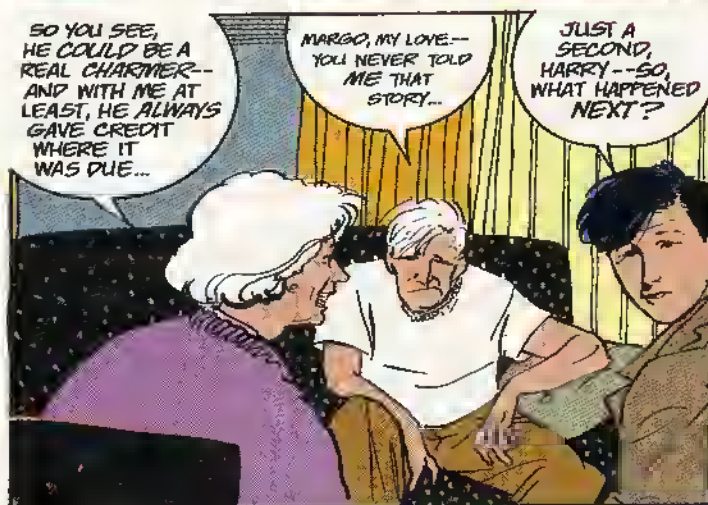
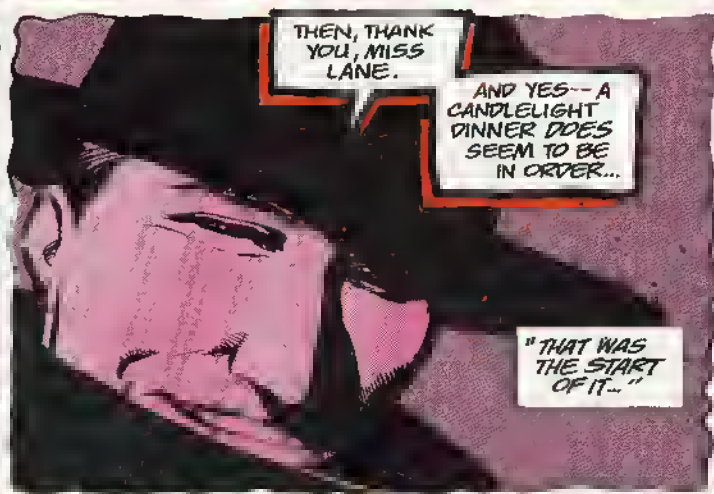
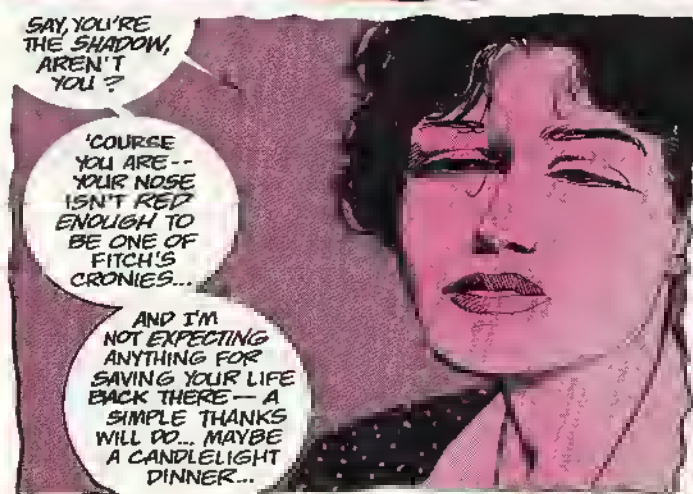


JERK.



THE WEED
OF CRIME
BEARS BITTER
FRUIT...

THE SWINE! HE
DESTROYED OUR
OPERATION-- BUT
I WILL MAKE
CERTAIN HE
NEVER--



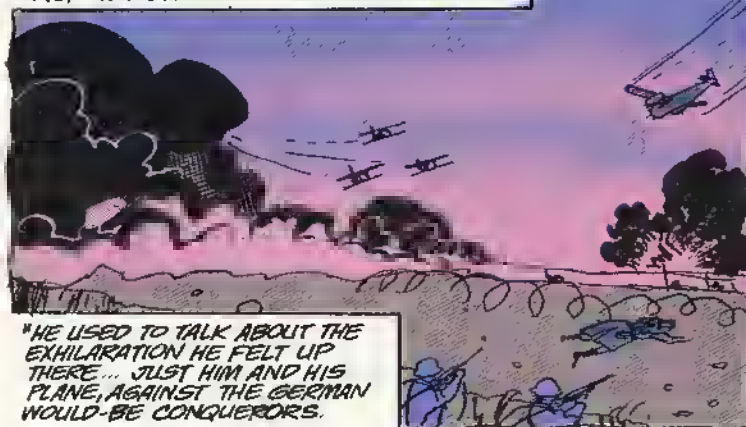
"BEFORE HE WAS THE SHADOW--
BEFORE HE TOOK THE LAMONT
CRANSTON IDENTITY FROM THAT
HORRID MAN WHO WANTED TO
BLOW UP NEW YORK CITY-- HE
WAS A GUY NAMED KENT ALLARD.

"BUT EVEN BACK THEN,
HE WAS... SPECIAL.

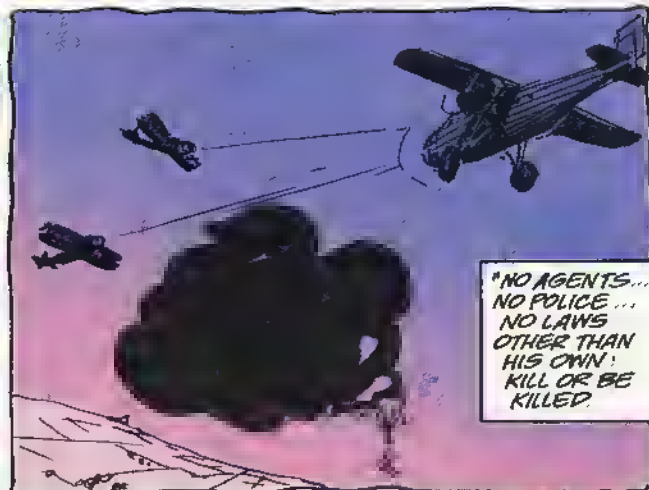
"HE WAS A PILOT--
ONE OF THE BEST.



"DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR HE FOUGHT
OVER THE BATTLEFIELDS OF GERMANY.



"HE USED TO TALK ABOUT THE
EXHILARATION HE FELT UP
THERE... JUST HIM AND HIS
PLANE, AGAINST THE GERMAN
WOULD-BE CONQUERORS.



"NO AGENTS...
NO POLICE...
NO LAWS
OTHER THAN
HIS OWN:
KILL OR BE
KILLED.

"HE SAID HE LOVED THOSE
DAYS MORE THAN ANY-
THING ELSE-- BATTLING IN
THE SKY WAS THE PUREST,
SIMPLEST EXPRESSION
OF HATE HE'D EVER
EXPERIENCED.



"AFTER THE WAR HE WAS
REWARDED FOR HIS SERVICE--
AND AFTER THEY GOT FINISHED
PINNING MEDALS ON HIM, THEY
TOLD HIM THE PLANE WAS
HIS TO KEEP.

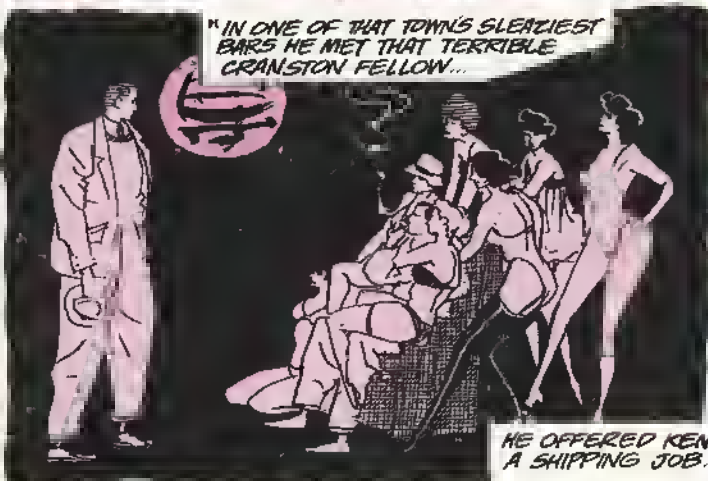


"BUT WITH NO BATTLES LEFT TO
FIGHT, HE LOST HIS SENSE OF
PURPOSE. HE FLEW THAT PLANE
AROUND THE WORLD, LOOKING FOR
THE ACTION AND ADVENTURE THE
WAR HAD GIVEN HIM...



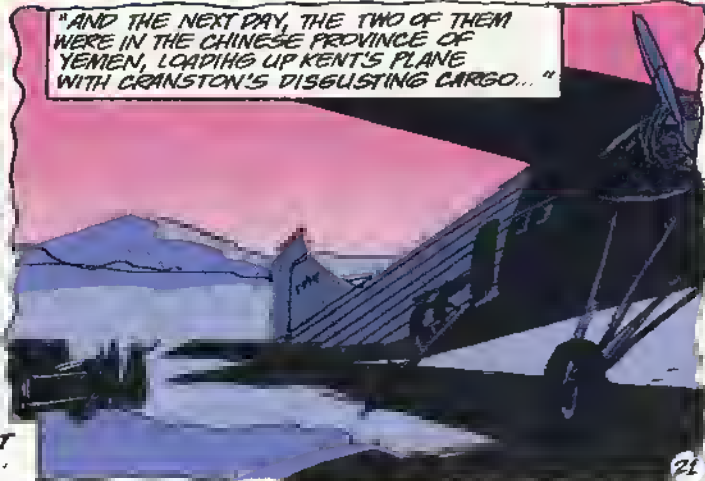
"HE HAD NO LUCK FINDING
IT--UNTIL HE LANDED
IN SHANGHAI!...

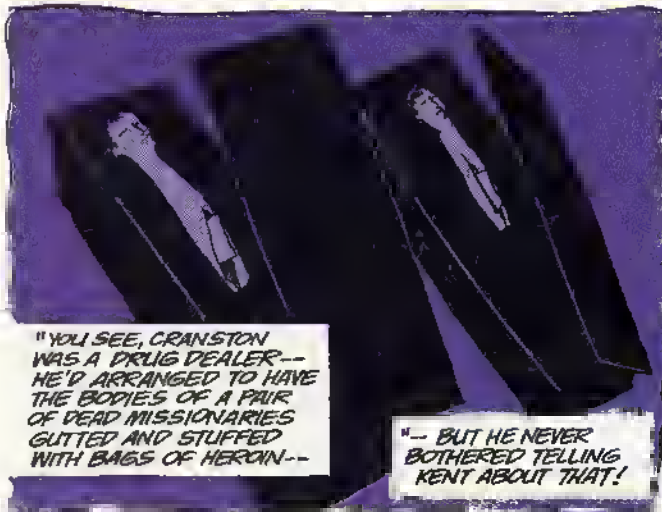
"IN ONE OF THAT TOWN'S SLEAZIEST
BARS HE MET THAT TERRIBLE
CRANSTON FELLOW...



HE OFFERED KENT
A SHIPPING JOB...

"AND THE NEXT DAY, THE TWO OF THEM
WERE IN THE CHINESE PROVINCE OF
YENMEN, LOADING UP KENT'S PLANE
WITH CRANSTON'S DISGUSTING CARGO..."

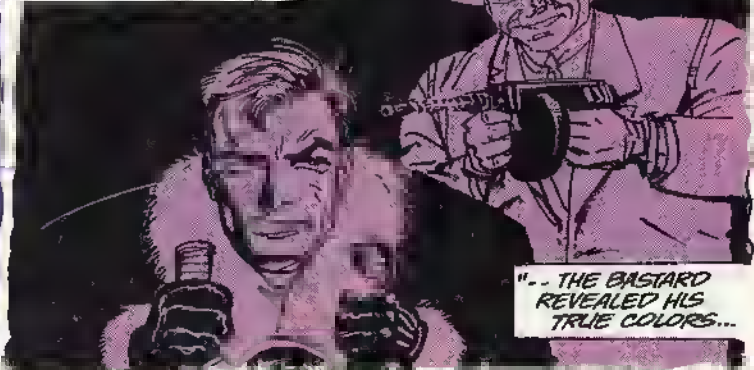




"YOU SEE, CRANSTON WAS A DRUG DEALER-- HE'D ARRANGED TO HAVE THE BODIES OF A PAIR OF DEAD MISSIONARIES GUTTED AND STUFFED WITH BAGS OF HEROIN--"

"-- BUT HE NEVER BOTHERED TELLING KENT ABOUT THAT!"

"ABOUT THREE HOURS INTO THE RETURN TRIP, KENT NOTICED A FUEL LEAK IN HIS PRECIOUS PLANE--BUT WHEN HE TOLD CRANSTON THEY'D HAVE TO DUMP THE CARGO TO PRESERVE FUEL --"



"-- THE BASTARD REVEALED HIS TRUE COLORS..."

"POOR KENT WAS HELPLESS THE GAS GAUGE BOTTOMED OUT SOMEWHERE OVER TIBET."



"... AND SLAMMED FULL SPEED INTO THE SIDE OF ONE OF THAT COUNTRY'S BIGGEST MOUNTAINS..."

"KENT KNEW HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD-- HE'D SEEN HIS ARM AND LEG GET SHEARED OFF AN INSTANT BEFORE HE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS--"



"-- BUT WHEN HE AWOKE, HE HAD PRACTICALLY NO INJURIES..."

"IT WAS AS THOUGH HE'D BEEN REASSEMBLED-- BY A TECHNOLOGY THAT WAS CENTURIES AHEAD OF OURS..."



"AND IF THAT THOUGHT STAGGERED HIM..."



"IT WAS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE STRANGE NEW WORLD THAT LAY RIGHT OUTSIDE HIS WINDOW--"

"...OR THE WOMAN THAT STOOD RIGHT OUTSIDE HIS DOOR..."

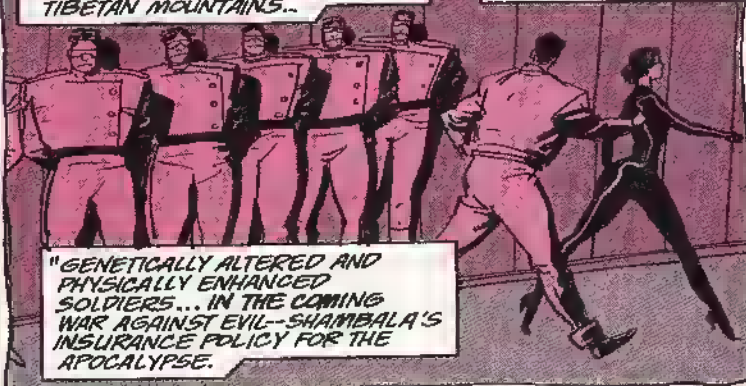


"HER NAME WAS RUDRA CAKRIN -- THE CITY WAS SHAMBALA..."

"KENT INSTANTLY FELL IN LOVE WITH BOTH OF THEM..."

"BUT IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE RUDRA GOT DOWN TO BUSINESS-- SHE EXPLAINED THAT SHAMBALA WAS A SCIENTIFICALLY ADVANCED CITY-STATE, HIDDEN DEEP IN THE TIBETAN MOUNTAINS..."

"SHE SHOWED HIM THEIR TECHNOLOGY... AND THEIR PROLIFEST ACHIEVEMENT-- THE PALADINS."



"GENETICALLY ALTERED AND PHYSICALLY ENHANCED SOLDIERS... IN THE COMING WAR AGAINST EVIL--SHAMBALA'S INSURANCE POLICY FOR THE APOCALYPSE."

"SHE ASKED HIM IF HE WANTED TO GO THROUGH THE TRAINING-- TO BE THE FIRST TO RE-ENTER OUR SOCIETY WITH THE SKILLS SHE WOULD TEACH HIM."

"CAN YOU IMAGINE THAT? ASKING KENT ALLARD, MISTER WORLD ADVENTURER, IF HE WOULD TAKE ON A LIFE OF ADVENTURE?!"

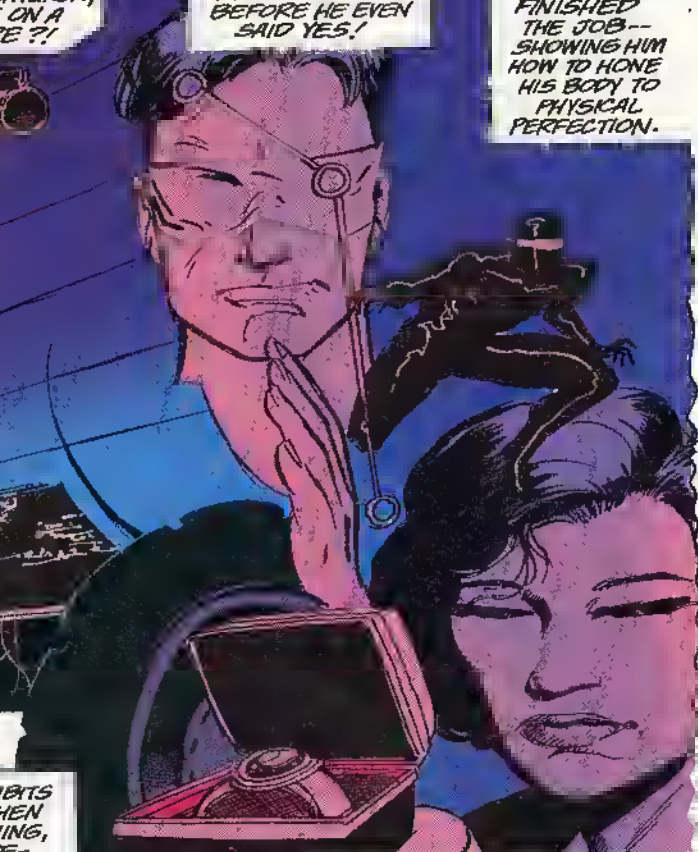
"I MEAN--HE WAS HALFWAY THERE BEFORE HE EVEN SAID YES!"

"BUT RUDRA AND HER PALS FINISHED THE JOB-- SHOWING HIM HOW TO HONE HIS BODY TO PHYSICAL PERFECTION."



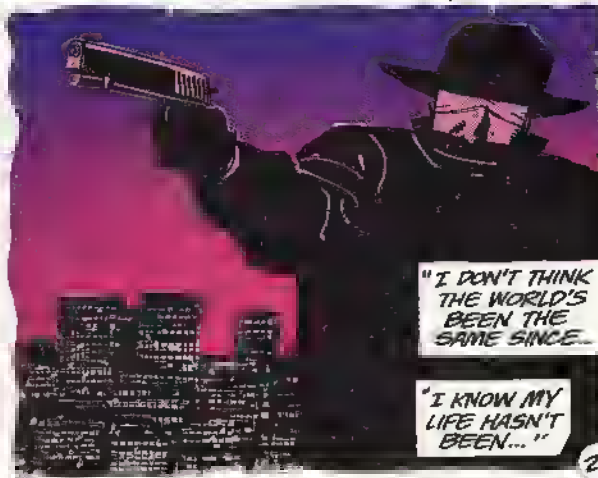
"WHILE TEACHING HIS MIND TO TRAVEL BEYOND HIS BODY-- TO BECOME A TRUE SHADOW WARRIOR..."

"OF COURSE, OLD HABITS DIED HARD... SO WHEN HE WASN'T IN TRAINING, KENT WAS BUSY RE-BUILDING HIS PLANE, FOR THE DAY HE'D RETURN TO THE WEST..."



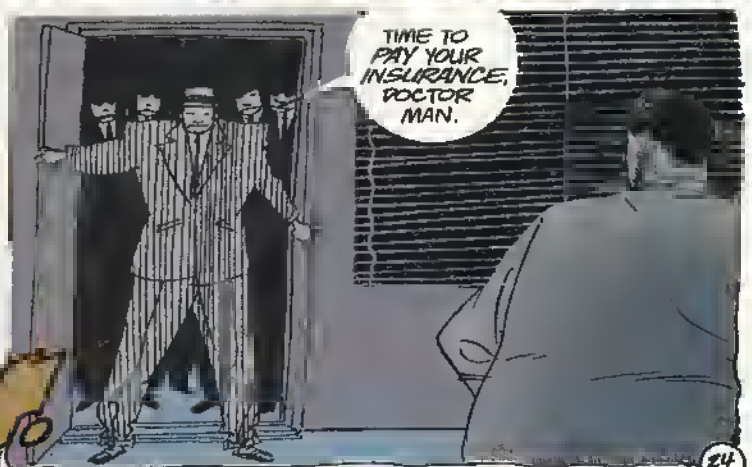
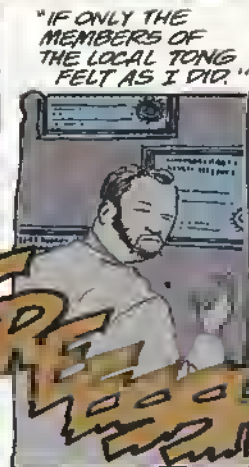
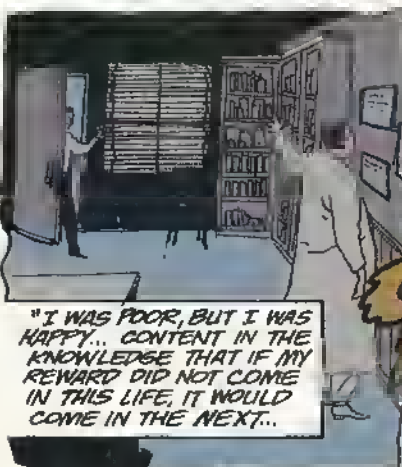
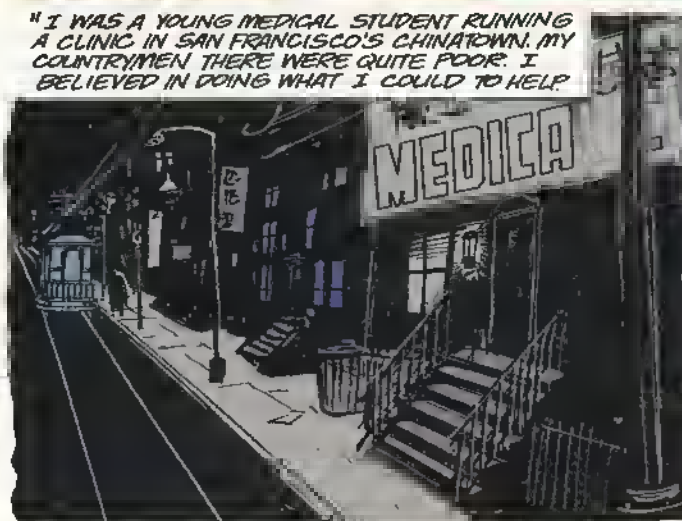
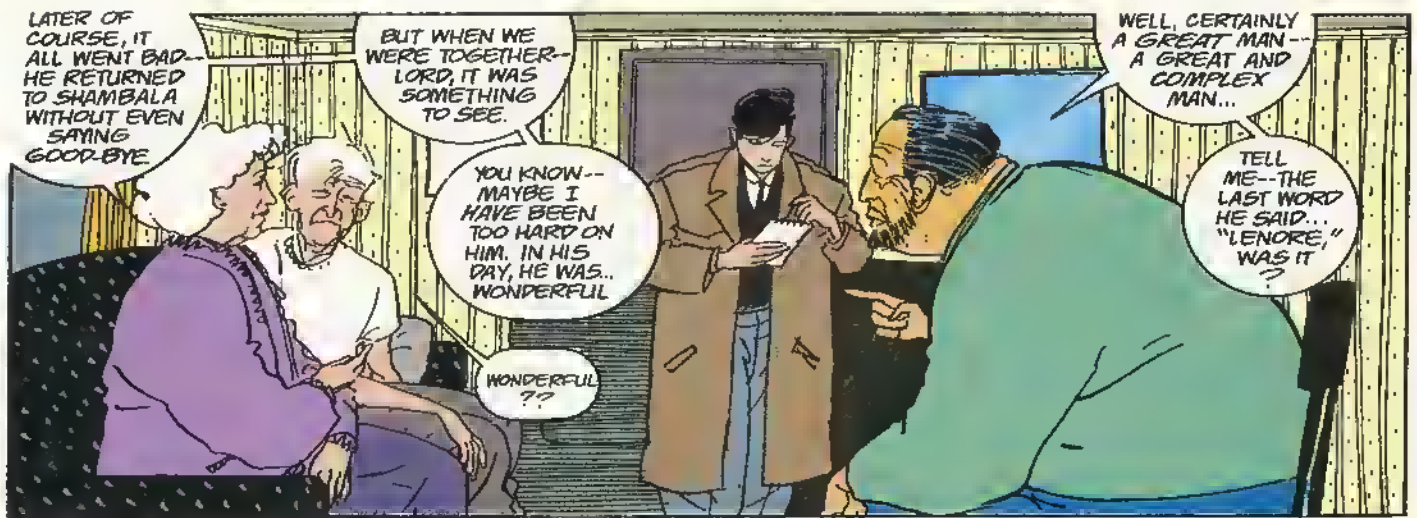
"AND WHEN THAT DAY CAME, RUDRA GAVE HIM HER FINAL GIFT... A BLAZING FIRE OPAL THAT COULD CONTROL MEN'S MINDS..."

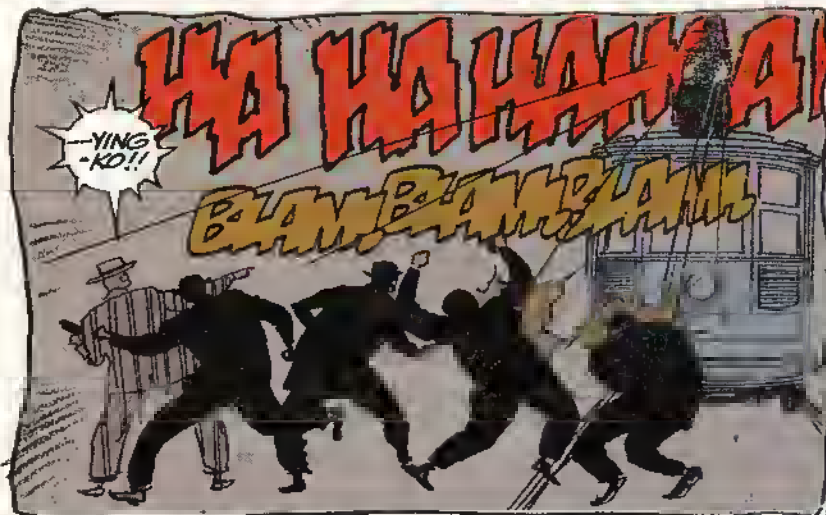
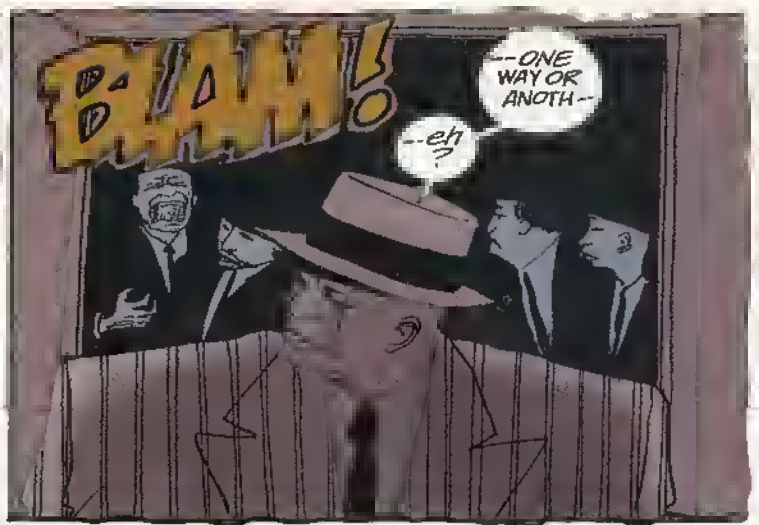
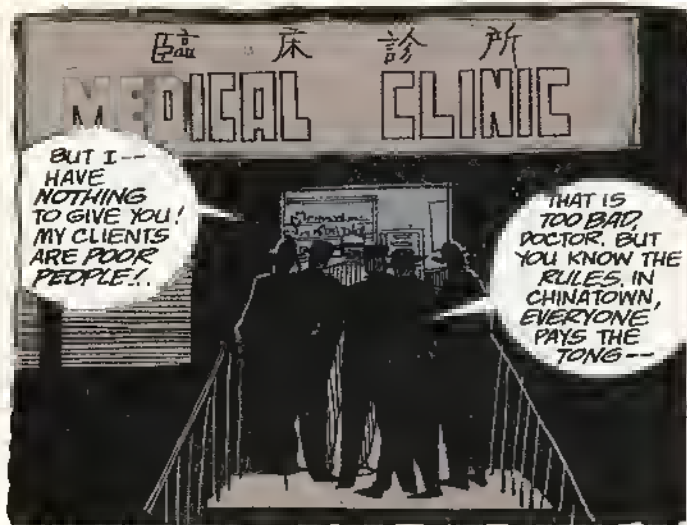
"AND SO, HE LEFT SHAMBALA IN THAT RICKETY OLD PLANE OF HIS... TO TAKE ON THE EVILS OF THE WORLD..."

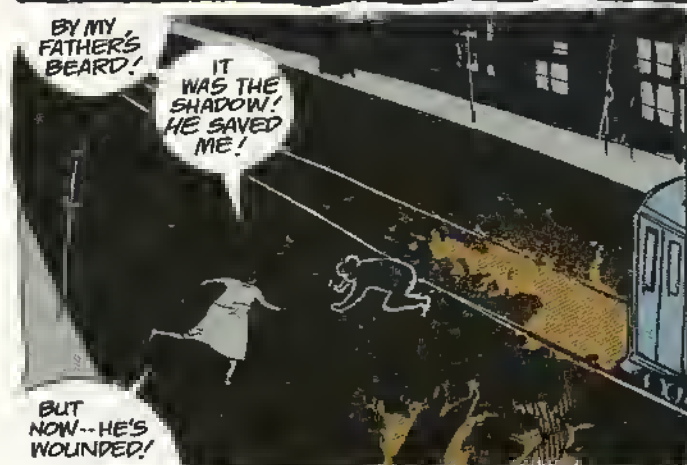
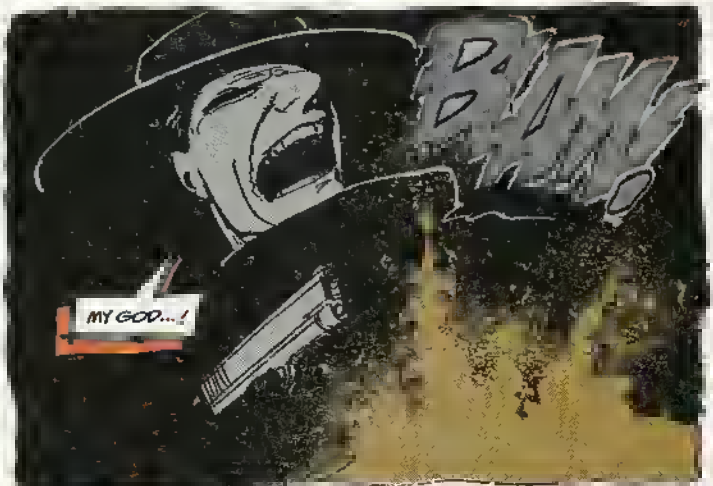
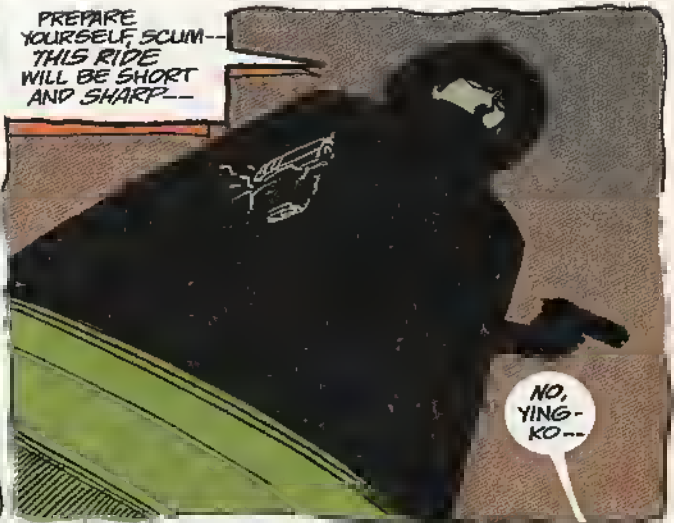


"I DON'T THINK THE WORLD'S BEEN THE SAME SINCE..."

"I KNOW MY LIFE HASN'T BEEN..."







"THE SHOOTIST HAD AIMED WELL. THE MASTER HAD BEEN GUT SHOT, WHICH ENSURED A SLOW, TORTUROUS DEATH.

"HE HAD LOST MUCH BLOOD, BUT I WORKED FEVERISHLY TO STOP THE FLOW.

"MASSIVE TRANSFUSIONS WERE CALLED FOR. BUT EVEN WITH THE NECESSARY PLASMA, THERE WERE NO GUARANTEES HE WOULD SURVIVE.

"FOR HOURS HE LAY THERE, IN WHAT I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WAS EXCRUCIATING PAIN. YET ALTHOUGH HE NEVER CRIED OUT, IN HIS DELIRIUM HE SAID A GREAT MANY THINGS.

"ONE WORD HE WHISPERED OVER AND OVER--IT WAS THE WORD 'LENORE.' HE NEVER WENT FURTHER THAN THAT--BUT IT SEEMED ALMOST MANTRIC IN ITS REPETITION--

"--AS THOUGH THE WORD ITSELF EASED HIS CONSIDERABLE PAIN.

"AS I SAID, IT WAS A LONG NIGHT--BUT BY THE LIGHT OF DAWN THE MASTER HAD MADE A REMARKABLE RECOVERY.

"WEAK AND TIRED, HE MADE HIS WAY TOWARDS THE DOOR.

"I SAID NOTHING AS HE OPENED IT. I WANTED TO THANK HIM--BUT WAS UNCERTAIN OF WHAT TO SAY.

"THEN, AS SLOWLY AS HE HAD OPENED THE DOOR--HE CLOSED IT.

"I SAW HIM NOD SILENTLY TO HIMSELF, AS THOUGH HE HAD COME TO SOME MANNER OF CONCLUSION.

"THEN HE TURNED TO FACE ME--AND HE SAID THE WORDS THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET, FOR THEY HAVE FOREVER CHANGED THE COURSE OF MY LIFE. HE SAID:

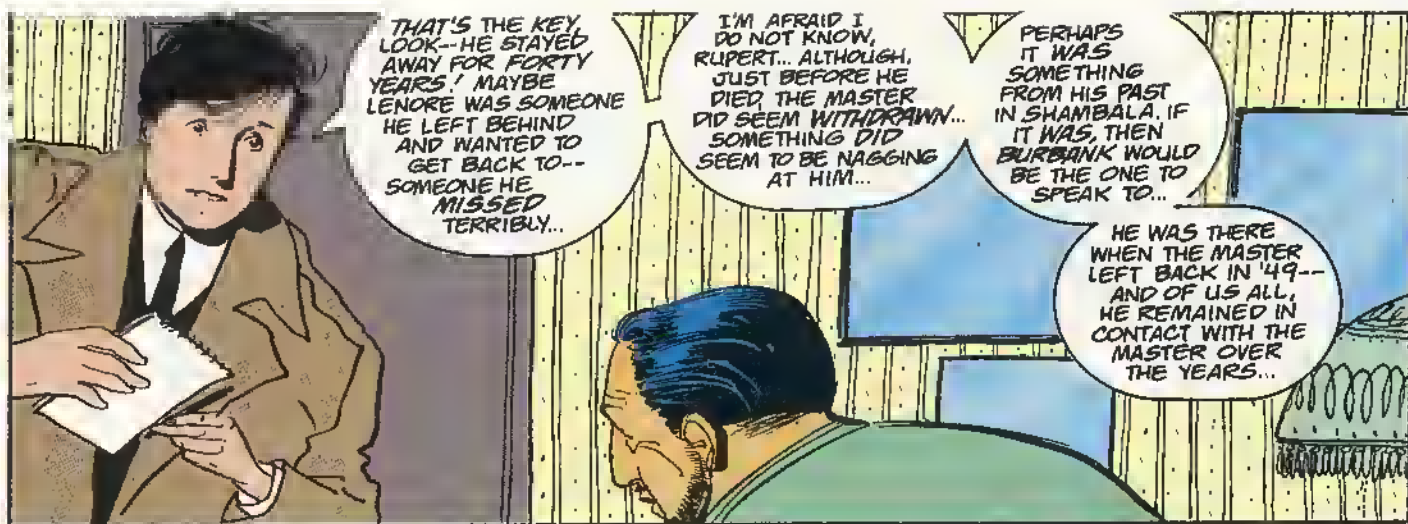
DOCTOR--
I HAVE A PROPOSITION FOR YOU...

AFTER THAT, I WAS THE MASTER'S PERSONAL PHYSICIAN--WHEREVER HE WENT, I WAS NEVER FAR BEHIND.

I SERVED HIM FOR A FULL FIFTEEN YEARS, RIGHT UNTIL THE TIME HE LEFT THE WEST, AND RETURNED TO SHAMBALA.

NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW WHAT HE DID THERE FOR FORTY YEARS--BEYOND TAKING A WIFE AND HAVING TWO CHILDREN.

SINCE HIS RETURN, I OFTEN WANTED TO ASK HIM, BUT TIME WAS SO SHORT. NOW I FEAR WE SHALL NEVER FIND OUT...



THAT'S THE KEY
LOOK--HE STAYED
AWAY FOR FORTY
YEARS! MAYBE
LENORE WAS SOMEONE
HE LEFT BEHIND
AND WANTED TO
GET BACK TO--
SOMEONE HE
MISSED
TERRIBLY...

I'M AFRAID I
DO NOT KNOW,
RUPERT... ALTHOUGH,
JUST BEFORE HE
DIED, THE MASTER
DID SEEM WITHDRAWN...
SOMETHING DID
SEEM TO BE NAGGING
AT HIM...

PERHAPS
IT WAS
SOMETHING
FROM HIS PAST
IN SHAMBALA. IF
IT WAS, THEN
BURBANK WOULD
BE THE ONE TO
SPEAK TO...

HE WAS THERE
WHEN THE MASTER
LEFT BACK IN '49--
AND OF US ALL,
HE REMAINED IN
CONTACT WITH THE
MASTER OVER
THE YEARS...



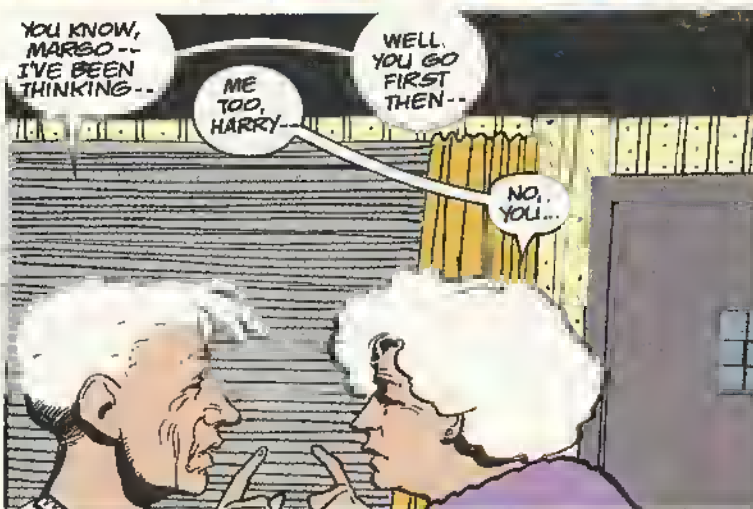
THAT'S
GREAT! IT
MIGHT BE THE
LEAD I'M
LOOKING FOR!
COULD I MEET
THIS BURBANK
GUY?

I SUPPOSE
SO... I'VE BEEN
MEANING TO
CHECK UP ON
HIS LADY FRIEND
ANYWAY. I'M
HER PHYSICIAN,
YOU KNOW...

BESIDES, I
BELIEVE
I'VE DONE
ALL I CAN
FOR HARRY
TONIGHT. BEST
TO LET HIM
MULL OVER THE
EVENING'S
CONVERSATIONS...

I'LL COME
BY FOR OUR
REGULAR
SESSION
TOMORROW
EVENING HARRY...
UNTIL THEN, PLEASE
KEEP AN OPEN
MIND REGARDING
THE SHADOW,
WILL YOU?

G'NIGHT
YOU TWO--
THANKS FOR
ALL YOUR
HELP!

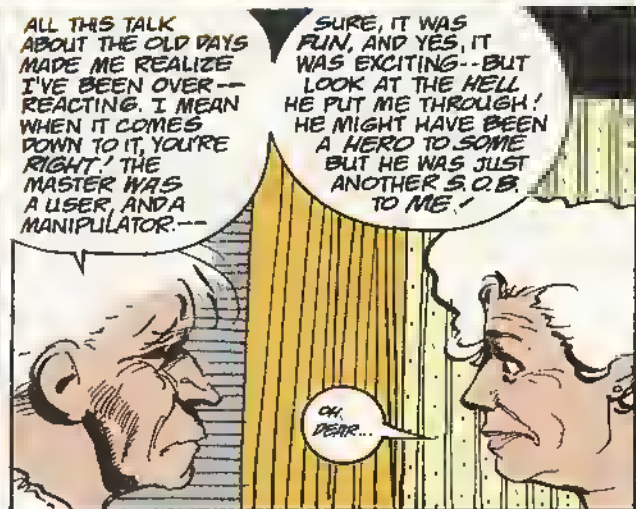


YOU KNOW,
MARGO--
I'VE BEEN
THINKING--

ME
TOO,
HARRY--

WELL,
YOU GO
FIRST
THEN--

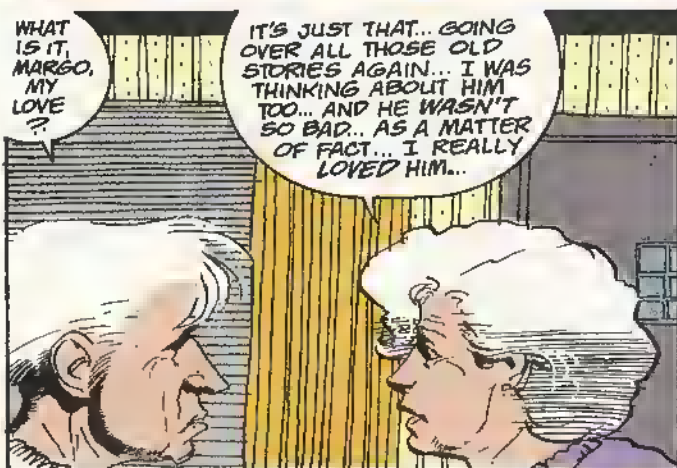
NO,
YOU...



ALL THIS TALK
ABOUT THE OLD DAYS
MADE ME REALIZE
I'VE BEEN OVER--
REACTING. I MEAN
WHEN IT COMES
DOWN TO IT, YOU'RE
RIGHT! THE
MASTER WAS
A USER, AND A
MANIPULATOR.--

SURE, IT WAS
FUN, AND YES, IT
WAS EXCITING--BUT
LOOK AT THE HELL
HE PUT ME THROUGH!
HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN
A HERO TO SOME
BUT HE WAS JUST
ANOTHER S.O.B.
TO ME!

OH,
DEAR...



WHAT
IS IT,
MARGO,
MY LOVE?

IT'S JUST THAT... GOING
OVER ALL THOSE OLD
STORIES AGAIN... I WAS
THINKING ABOUT HIM
TOO... AND HE WASN'T
SO BAD... AS A MATTER
OF FACT... I REALLY
LOVED HIM...



...AND I
SOB? MISS
HIM SO
MUCH...

NOT SO FAST
CHOMP CHOMP!
CODY! YOU'RE
LIABLE TO
CHOKER ME
WITH THOSE--

OOPS-- THERE'S
THE DOOR!
REUBEN--BE A
DEAR AND GET
IT FOR ME,
WILL YOU?

BANK
BANK!
EEEP

EEEP

AH, LORELEI! AND
HOW ARE WE
FEELING THIS
EVENING? I HOPE
I'M NOT INTRUDING..

NONSENSE,
DOCTOR--YOU'RE
ALWAYS
WELCOME
HERE!

EEEP
EEEP

I'VE BROUGHT
A FRIEND OF
MINE--I'M
AFRAID I DIDN'T
PREPARE HIM
FOR YOU AND
THE MONKEYS...

I
BELIEVE
HE'S STILL
RECOVERING.

PEOPLE ARE
FUNNY, THAT
WAY, eh DOC?
YOU'D THINK
THEY NEVER
SAW A CHIMP
BEFORE...

WHO'S
THERE
HONEY?

IT'S DOCTOR
TAM, DEAR --
AND HE'S
BROUGHT A
NICE YOUNG
MAN WITH
HIM...

THE NAME'S
TOME, SIR--
RUPERT
TOME...

YOUNG RUPERT IS
DOING A SPECIAL
TRIBUTE TO THE
MASTER'S WORK...

GLAD T'HEAR IT, RUPE-- BOUT TIME
SOMEONE THOUGHT OF DOING A
BOOK ON THE MASTER... 'COURSE,
I WOULD'A DONE IT YEARS AGO
MYSELF, BUT I AIN'T TOO GOOD
WITH WORDS...

SPLENDID-- THEN
YOU WILL KNOW EXACTLY
THE KIND OF TALES
RUPERT WANTS TO
HEAR. NOW, WHY DON'T
YOU TWO FIND A
NICE, QUIET
PLACE --

-- AND I'LL
GIVE LORELEI
A QUICK
CHECK-UP
WHILE YOU
TALK...

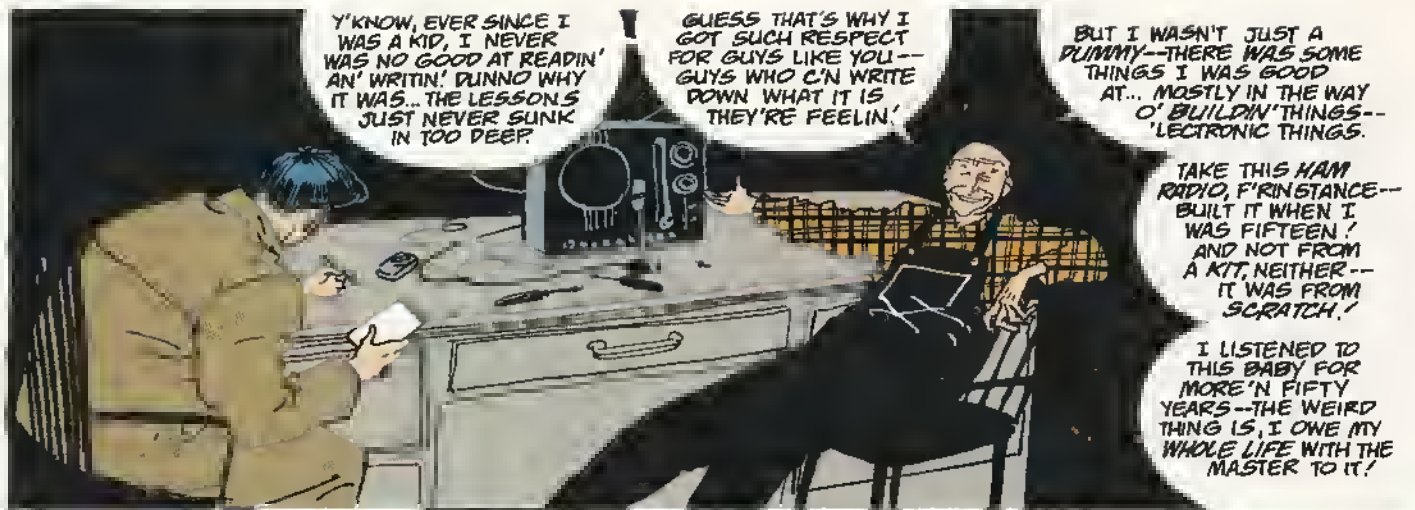
FINE
BY ME--
C'MON,
RUPE.

RIGHT THIS WAY,
FELLA--BOY, HAVE
I GOT A SURPRISE
FOR YOU!

WELL, HERE IT IS,
RUPE-- THE NERVE
CENTER OF THE
SHADOW'S OLD
OPERATION!

WE CONTROLLED
EVERYTHING
FROM RIGHT HERE--
AND THIS'S THE
BEST PLACE
T'HEAR ALL
ABOUT IT!

PULL
UP A CHAIR,
RUPE -- I
GOT A
STORY
T'TELL!



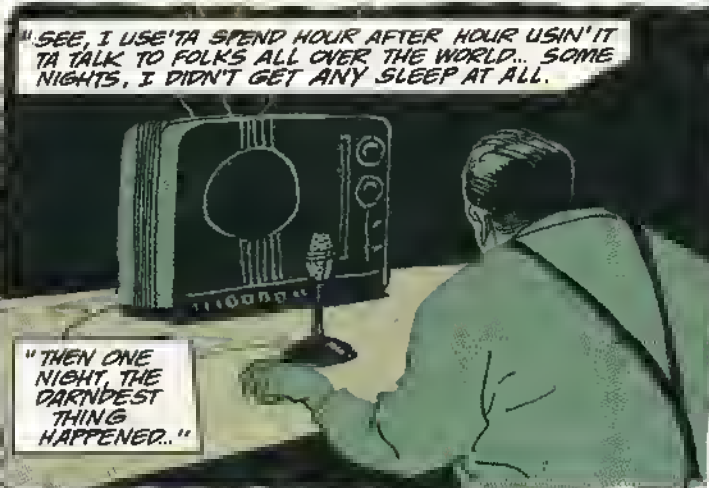
Y'KNOW, EVER SINCE I WAS A KID, I NEVER WAS NO GOOD AT READIN' AN' WRITIN' DUNNO WHY IT WAS... THE LESSONS JUST NEVER SUNK IN TOO DEEP.

GUESS THAT'S WHY I GOT SUCH RESPECT FOR GUYS LIKE YOU-- GUYS WHO C'N WRITE DOWN WHAT IT IS THEY'RE FEELIN'.

BUT I WASN'T JUST A DUMMYY--THERE WAS SOME THINGS I WAS GOOD AT... MOSTLY IN THE WAY O' BUILDIN' THINGS-- 'LECTRONIC THINGS.

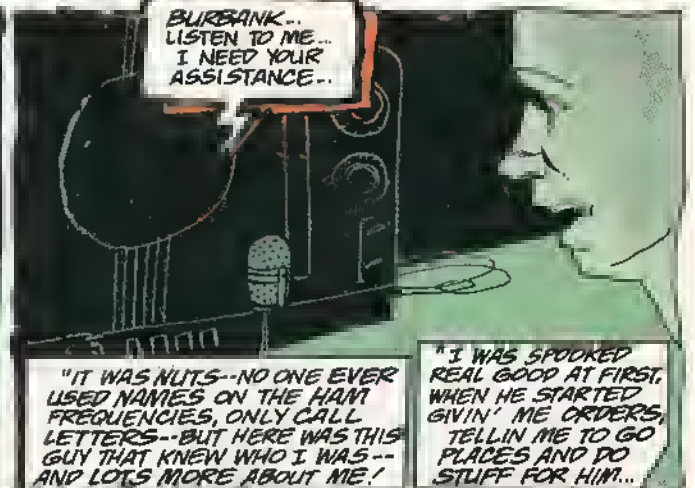
TAKE THIS HAM RADIO, F'INSTANCE-- BUILT IT WHEN I WAS FIFTEEN! AND NOT FROM A KIT, NEITHER-- IT WAS FROM SCRATCH!

I LISTENED TO THIS BABY FOR MORE'N FIFTY YEARS--THE WEIRD THING IS, I OWE MY WHOLE LIFE WITH THE MASTER TO IT!



"SEE, I USE'TA SPEND HOUR AFTER HOUR USIN' IT TA TALK TO FOLKS ALL OVER THE WORLD... SOME NIGHTS, I DIDN'T GET ANY SLEEP AT ALL.

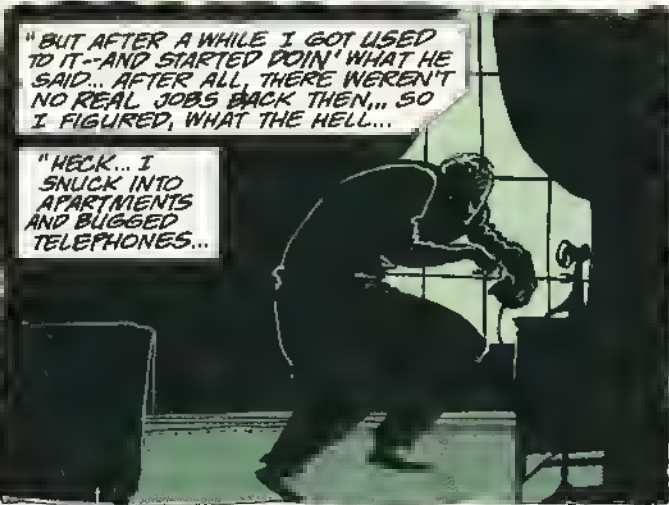
"THEN ONE NIGHT, THE DARKEST THING HAPPENED..."



BURBANK... LISTEN TO ME... I NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE...

"IT WAS NUTS--NO ONE EVER USED NAMES ON THE HAM FREQUENCIES, ONLY CALL LETTERS--BUT HERE WAS THIS GUY THAT KNEW WHO I WAS-- AND LOTS MORE ABOUT ME!

"I WAS SPOOKED REAL GOOD AT FIRST, WHEN HE STARTED GIVIN' ME ORDERS, TELLIN ME TO GO PLACES AND DO STUFF FOR HIM...

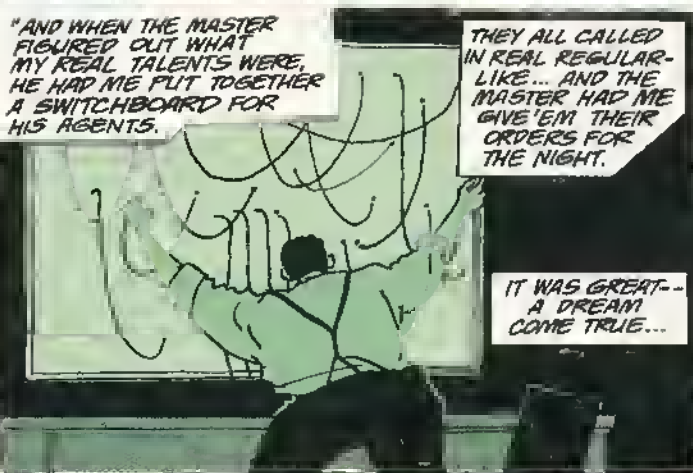


"BUT AFTER A WHILE I GOT USED TO IT--AND STARTED DOIN' WHAT HE SAID... AFTER ALL, THERE WEREN'T NO REAL JOBS BACK THEN," SO I FIGURED, WHAT THE HELL...

"HECK... I SNUCK INTO APARTMENTS AND BUGGED TELEPHONES..."



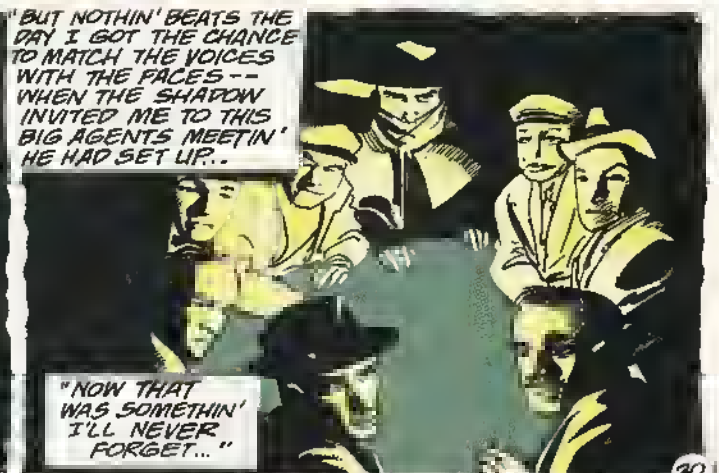
"INSTALLED TRACERS UNDER THE BODIES OF MOB BIGWIG CARS..."



"AND WHEN THE MASTER FIGURED OUT WHAT MY REAL TALENTS WERE, HE HAD ME PUT TOGETHER A SWITCHBOARD FOR HIS AGENTS.

THEY ALL CALLED IN REAL REGULAR-LIKE... AND THE MASTER HAD ME GIVE'EM THEIR ORDERS FOR THE NIGHT.

IT WAS GREAT-- A DREAM COME TRUE...



"BUT NOTHIN' BEATS THE DAY I GOT THE CHANCE TO MATCH THE VOICES WITH THE FACES-- WHEN THE SHADOW INVITED ME TO THIS BIG AGENTS MEETIN' HE HAD SET UP..."

"NOW THAT WAS SOMETHIN' I'LL NEVER FORGET..."



AN' THAT'S THE WAY IT WENT-- RIGHT UP UNTIL THE WINTER OF '49. Y'SEE, HE'D BECOME KINDA DISTANT... ONLY CALLIN' IN EVERY NOW AN THEN... AT FIRST I FIGGERED HE JUST WANTED TO BREAK AWAY FROM US... LIKE, GO SOLO.

BUT THAT WEREN'T IT AT ALL...

HE RANG ME UP ONE NIGHT AN' ASKED ME TO MEET HIM. SOMETHIN' WAS UP-- THE MASTER NEVER ASKED US TO DO ANYTHING...



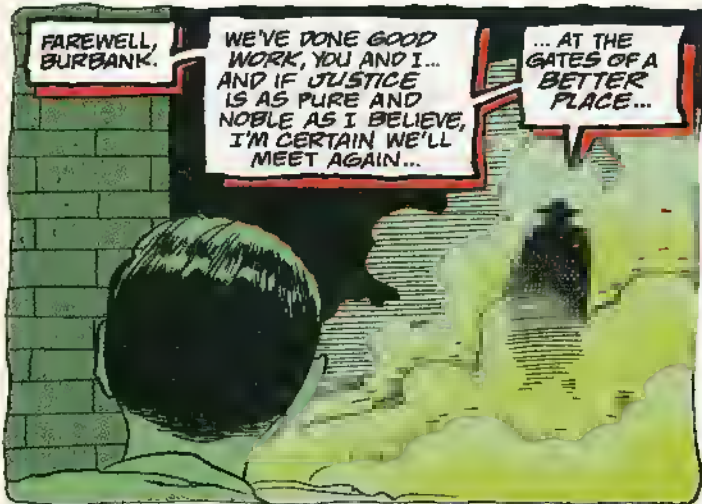
"... HE JUST ORDERED US AROUND LIKE HE OWNED US. WE NEVER MINDED, THOUGH... THAT WAS JUST HIS WAY OF DOIN' THINGS..."

"JUST LIKE CREEPING UP BEHIND US WAS JUST HIS WAY OF INTRODUCIN' HIMSELF..."

HI, MASTER. WHAT'S

BAD NEWS, I'M AFRAID. I'M LEAVING, OLD FRIEND. SOMETHING HAS COME UP IN SHAMBALA-- IT REQUIRES MY IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.

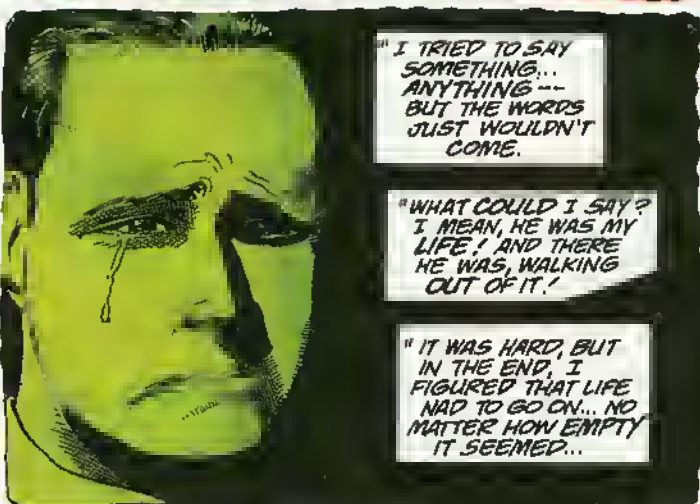
YOU WON'T BE SEEING ME AGAIN, BURBANK. BUT I WANTED TO THANK YOU BEFORE I LEFT OF ALL MY AGENTS, YOU WERE THE MOST FAITHFUL.



FAREWELL, BURBANK.

WE'VE DONE GOOD WORK, YOU AND I... AND IF JUSTICE IS AS PURE AND NOBLE AS I BELIEVE, I'M CERTAIN WE'LL MEET AGAIN...

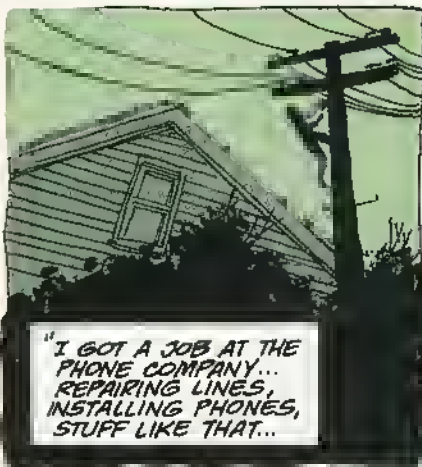
... AT THE GATES OF A BETTER PLACE...



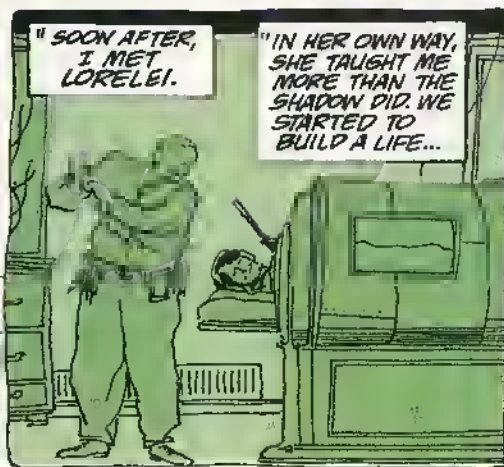
"I TRIED TO SAY SOMETHING... ANYTHING... BUT THE WORDS JUST WOULDN'T COME.

"WHAT COULD I SAY? I MEAN, HE WAS MY LIFE! AND THERE HE WAS, WALKING OUT OF IT."

"IT WAS HARD, BUT IN THE END, I FIGURED THAT LIFE HAD TO GO ON... NO MATTER HOW EMPTY IT SEEMED..."



"I GOT A JOB AT THE PHONE COMPANY... REPAIRING LINES, INSTALLING PHONES, STUFF LIKE THAT..."



"SOON AFTER, I MET LORELEI.

"IN HER OWN WAY, SHE TAUGHT ME MORE THAN THE SHADOW DID. WE STARTED TO BUILD A LIFE..."



"... BUT I NEVER GAVE UP LISTENIN' TO THE OLD HAM RADIO... OR NOPIN' FOR THE DAY THE ADVENTURE WOULD BEGIN AGAIN..."

"BUT WHEN IT FINALLY DID, I WASN'T NEAR PREPARED FOR IT! IT WAS TEN YEARS LATER... BUT IT HARDLY FELT A DAY..."

≡CRRZZT≡
BURBANK...
ARE YOU THERE?
≡CRRZZT≡

PAUGHHHH!!

COME IN,
BURBANK,
≡CRRZZT≡

IS
THAT
--?

YES,
BURBANK...
IT'S ME.
BEEN A
WHILE,
CH?

Y-YEAH...
UHH...
WHAT CAN
I... DO
FOR YOU?

JUST... TALK
TO ME. TELL
ME WHAT I'VE
MISSED... WHAT'S
HAPPENED TO
THE WORLD
SINCE I LEFT
IT.

"AND I DID. EVERY NIGHT I READ HIM THE PAPERS, COVER TO COVER-- THE FUNNIES EVEN... BUT HE ALWAYS WANTED MORE.

"IT WENT LIKE THAT FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS... AND THEN, IN 1980, HE MADE A SPECIAL REQUEST..."

"I WAS TO PICK UP A MAN AT AN AIRFIELD IN NEW JERSEY--AND FOLLOW HIS INSTRUCTIONS AS I WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED THE MASTER'S OWN..."

"I THOUGHT I WAS READY FOR ANYTHING--WITH THE MASTER YOU HAD TO BE--"

"ANYTHING... BUT THIS..."

MASTER...?

IN THE FLESH,
BURBANK.
SURPRISED?

SURPRISED!
OH, MASTER
≡SHIF≡ YOU
DON'T KNOW
HOW I
MISSED YOU--
ALL THOSE
YEARS I--

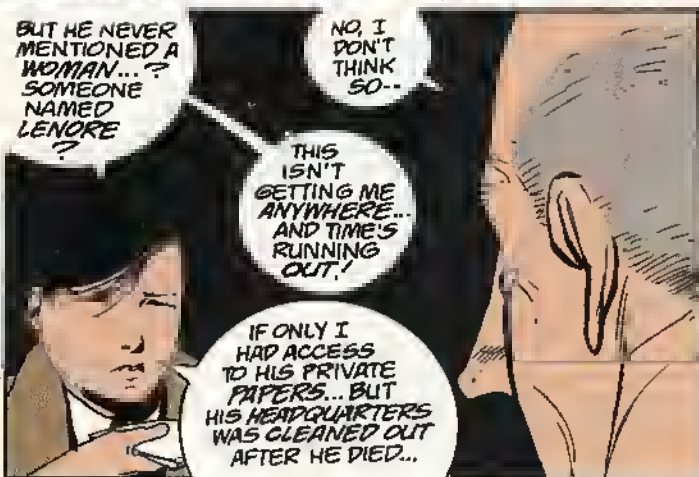
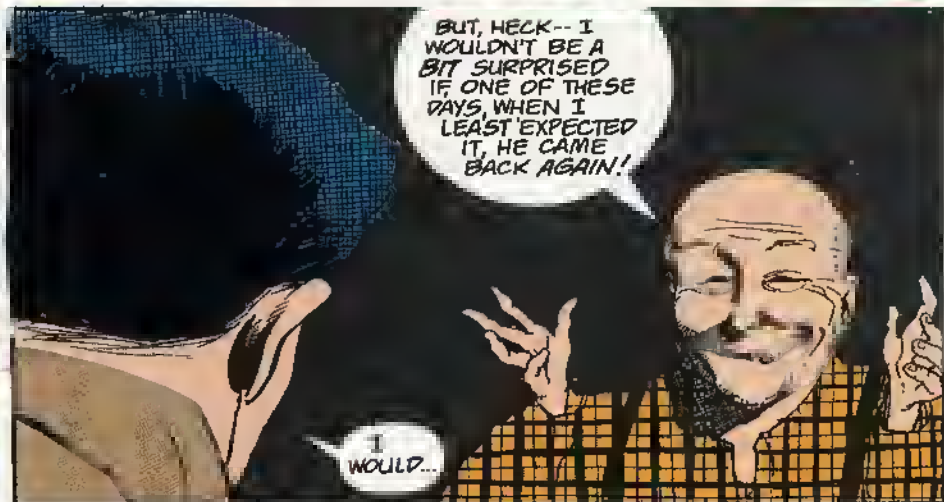
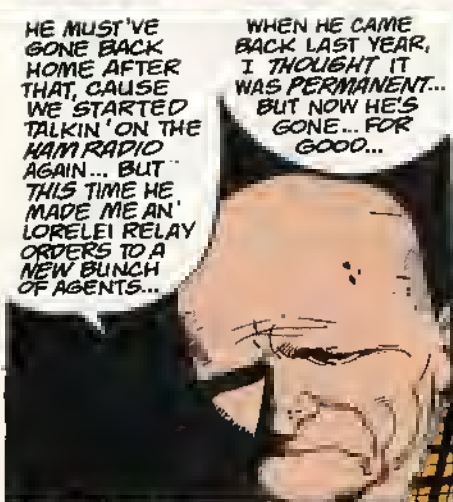
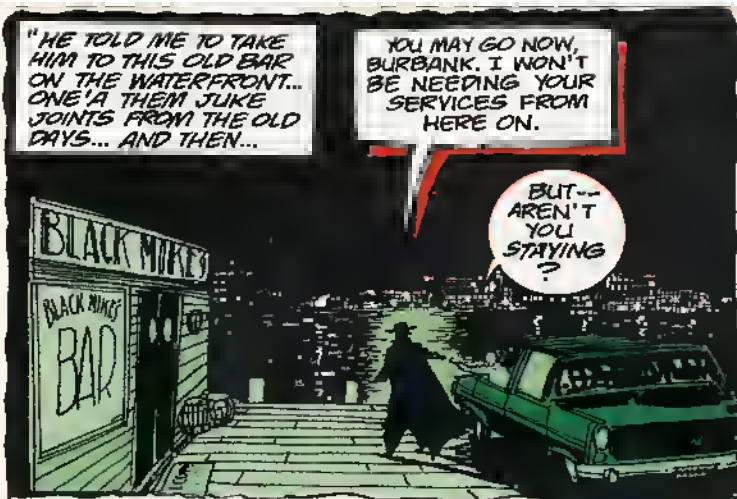
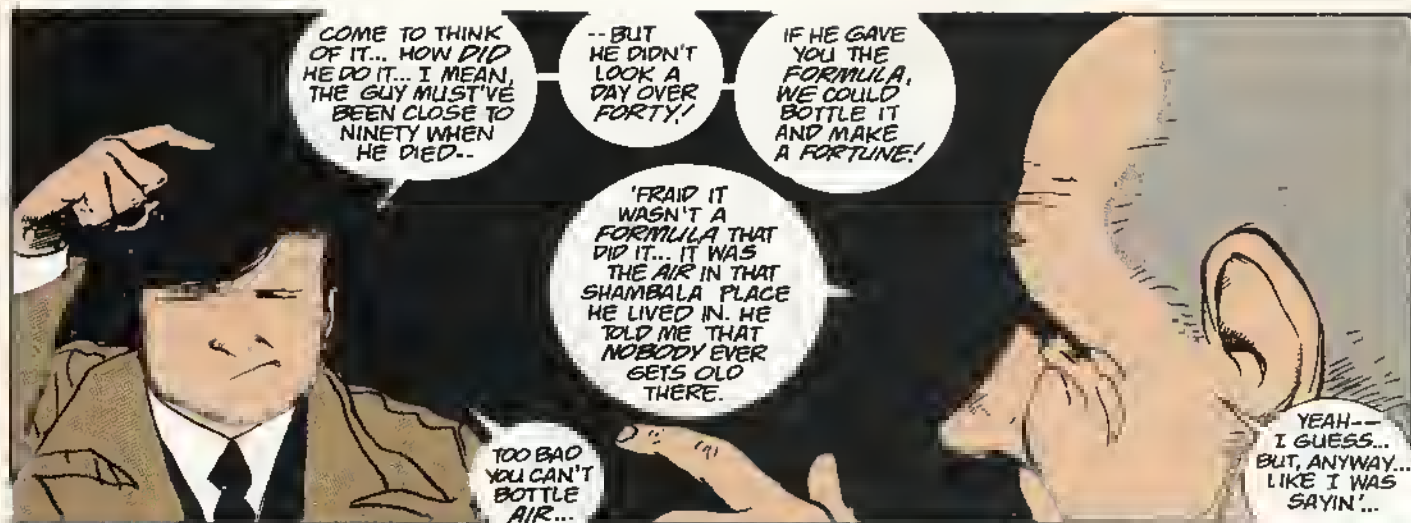
NO TIME
FOR THAT,
BURBANK.
START THE
CAR--I HAVE
WORK TO
DO.

I CAN FEEL IT, BURBANK. WE ARE ON THE EVE OF WAR... A WAR AGAINST EVIL THAT WILL DEVASTATE THIS CONTINENT... UNLESS I CAN BEAT IT BACK INTO THE DARKNESS.

AND I MUST BE PREPARED. NEW AGENTS MUST BE RECRUITED--THE ORIGINALS HAVE GROWN OLD AND INFIRM...

BUT YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, LOOK SWELL-- AS GOOD AS THE DAY YOU LEFT!

WHAT IS IT? VITAMINS? ME AN' THE OTHER OLD-TIMER'S SURE COULD USE A DOSE, IF YOU GOT ANY EXTRA...



DC GOES TO
GREAT LENGTHS TO
BRING YOU THE ORIGINAL
STRETCHABLE SUPER-HERO—

PLASTIC MAN®

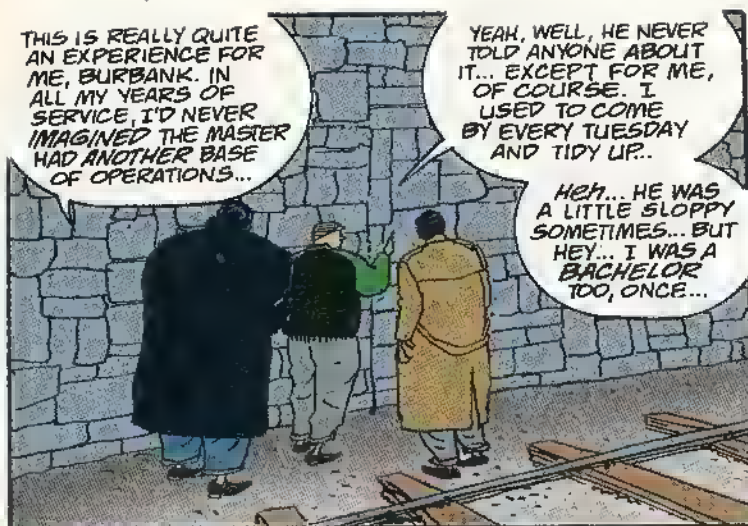
FOUR-ISSUE
MINI-SERIES
IN STANDARD
FORMAT

KINDA
SHORT FOR
SUCH A
LONG
GUY, HUH?



Beginning
in September

Written by Phil Foglio
Pencilled by Hilary Barta
Inked by John Nyberg



THIS IS REALLY QUITE AN EXPERIENCE FOR ME, BURBANK. IN ALL MY YEARS OF SERVICE, I'D NEVER IMAGINED THE MASTER HAD ANOTHER BASE OF OPERATIONS...

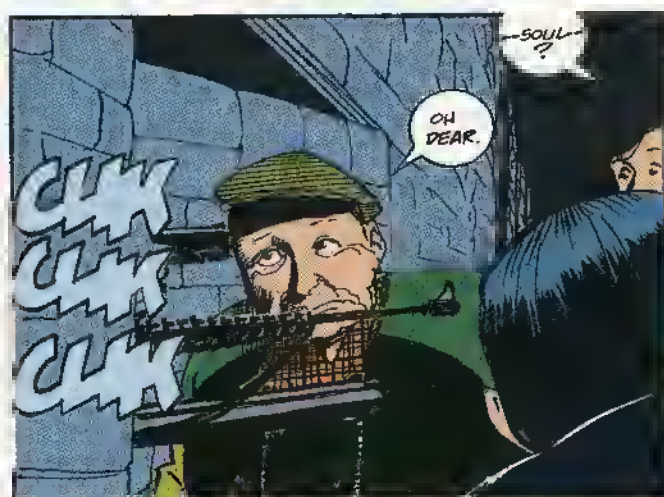
YEAH, WELL, HE NEVER TOLD ANYONE ABOUT IT... EXCEPT FOR ME, OF COURSE. I USED TO COME BY EVERY TUESDAY AND TIDY UP...

HEH... HE WAS A LITTLE SLOPPY SOMETIMES... BUT HEY... I WAS A BACHELOR TOO, ONCE...



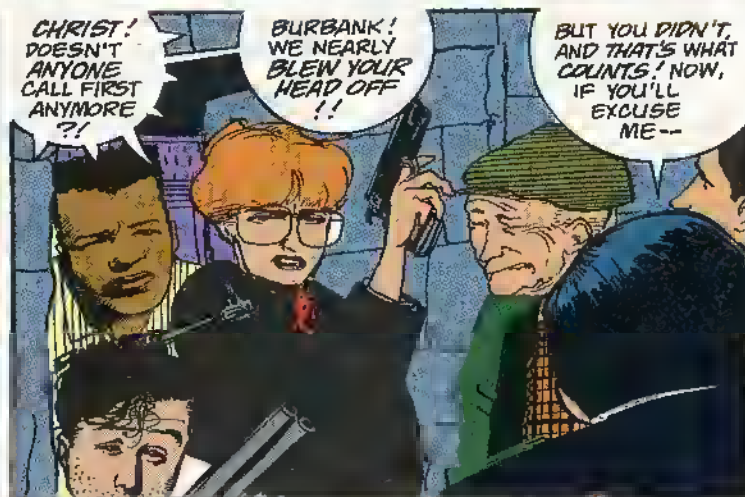
NOW, RUPERT--YOU GOTTA PROMISE NOT TO TELL ANYONE 'BOUT THIS PLACE-- AFTER THE FLATIRON HQ GOT RAIDED, I GOT TO BE CAREFUL...

SCOUTS HONOR, MISTER BURBANK! I WON'T TELL A--



--SOUL--

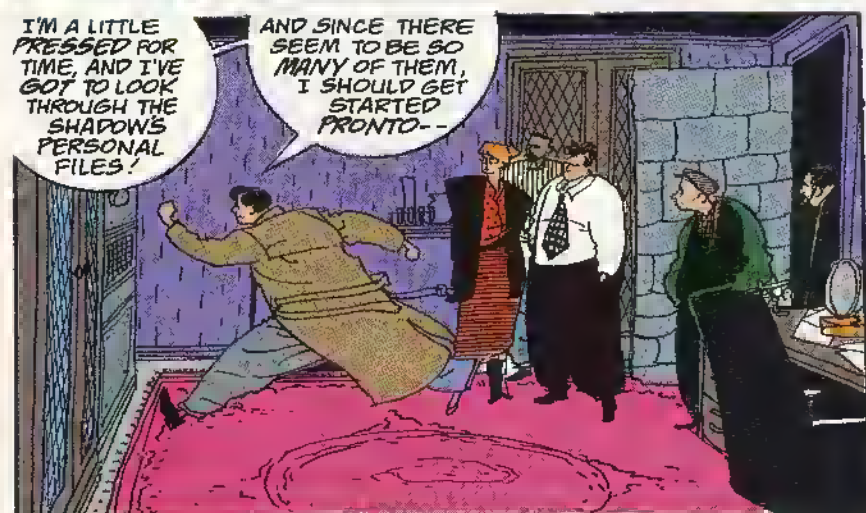
OH DEAR.



CHRIST! DOESN'T ANYONE CALL FIRST ANYMORE?!

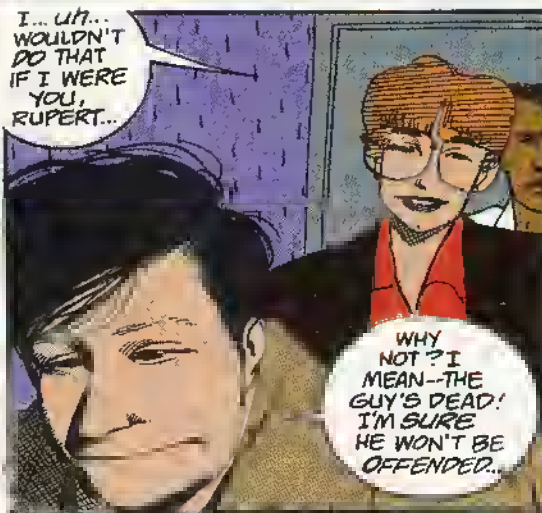
BURBANK! WE NEARLY BLEW YOUR HEAD OFF!!

BUT YOU DIDN'T, AND THAT'S WHAT COUNTS! NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME--



I'M A LITTLE PRESSED FOR TIME, AND I'VE GOT TO LOOK THROUGH THE SHADOWS' PERSONAL FILES!

AND SINCE THERE SEEM TO BE SO MANY OF THEM, I SHOULD GET STARTED PRONTO--

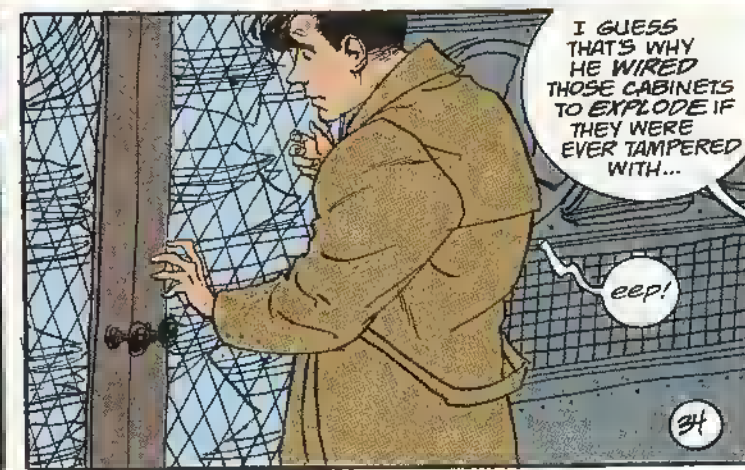


I... UH... WOULDN'T DO THAT IF I WERE YOU, RUPERT...

WHY NOT? I MEAN--THE GUY'S DEAD! I'M SURE HE WON'T BE OFFENDED...

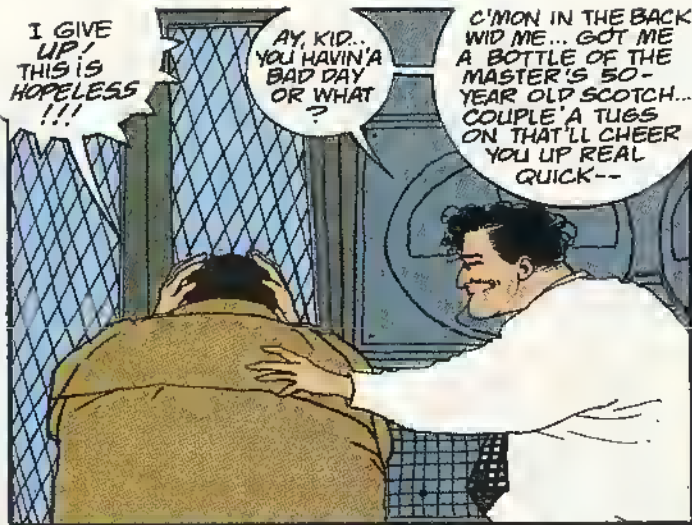


NO... BUT THE MASTER VALUED HIS PRIVACY...



I GUESS THAT'S WHY HE WIRED THOSE CABINETS TO EXPLODE IF THEY WERE EVER TAMPHERED WITH...

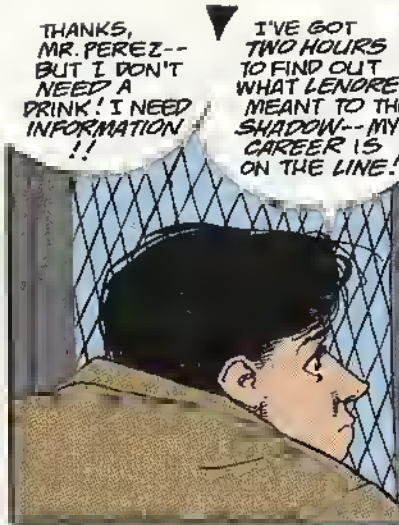
eep!



I GIVE UP!
THIS IS
HOPELESS
!!!

AY, KID...
YOU HAVIN' A
BAD DAY
OR WHAT?

C'MON IN THE BACK
WID ME... GOT ME
A BOTTLE OF THE
MASTER'S 50-
YEAR OLD SCOTCH...
COUPLE 'A TUGS
ON THAT'LL CHEER
YOU UP REAL
QUICK--



THANKS,
MR. PEREZ--
BUT I DON'T
NEED A
DRINK! I NEED
INFORMATION
!!

I'VE GOT
TWO HOURS
TO FIND OUT
WHAT LENORE
MEANT TO THE
SHADOW-- MY
CAREER IS
ON THE LINE!



LENORE, HUH? AHA...
IT WAS PROBABLY A
NICKNAME FER THE
MASTER'S FAVORITE
GUN... THAT WAS THE
ONLY THING HE EVER
LOVED, FAR AS I
COULD FIGGER...

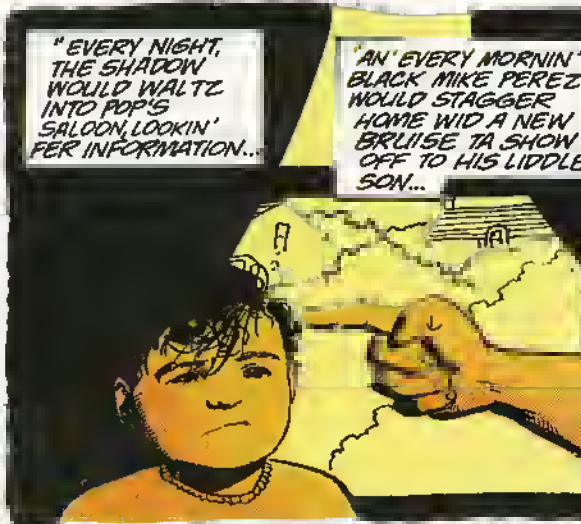


THINK, SIR--
THINK! GO
ALL THE WAY
BACK-- TRY
TO REMEMBER
HIM SAYING
THAT WORD
!!

JEEZ... ALL
THE WAY BACK,
HUH?... THOSE
MEM'RIES GIVE
ME THE
WILLIES
!!

Y'SEE, THE
SHADOW AN'
MY POP HAD
WHATCHA MIGHT
CALL A
RELATIONSHIP...

POP WASN'T AN
AGENT, EXACTLY...
HE WAS MORE LIKE
A WHIPPING BOY...



"EVERY NIGHT,
THE SHADOW
WOULD WALTZ
INTO POP'S
SALOON, LOOKIN'
FER INFORMATION..."

"AN' EVERY MORNIN'
BLACK MIKE PEREZ
WOULD STAGGER
HOME WID A NEW
BRUISE 'A SHOW
OFF TO HIS LITTLE
SON..."



"HE TOL' ME ALL ABOUT
THE MASTER... OVER
AN OVER AGAIN... A
MILLION TIMES, IT
SEEMED... PRACTICALLY
SCARED ME OUTTA
MY HEAD..."



"GUESS THE SHADOW
DIDN'T CARE MUCH
FER POP... NOT AS I
BLAMED HIM..."

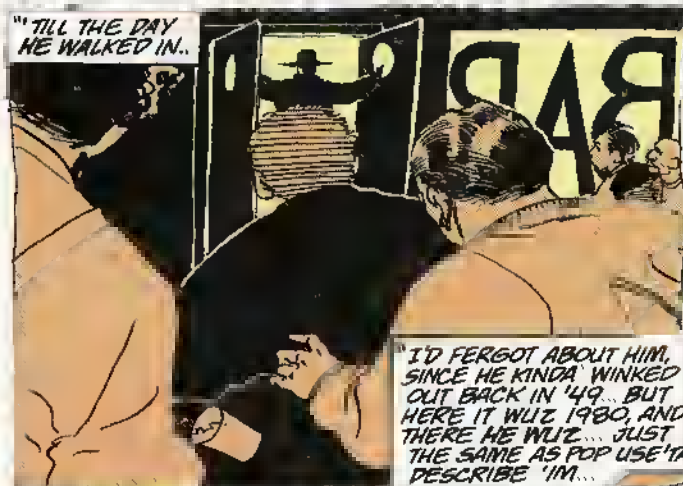
"HE WAS A PRETTY
SLEAZY GUY..."

"WHEN POP FINALLY KICKED THE BUCKET--OF NATCHERAL CAUSES, MIND YA--HE LEFT HIS BAR PLACE TA ME, MAINLY 'CAUSE NOBODY ELSE WANTED IT..

"BLACK MIKE'S WAS A GREAT OLD PLACE... BREW RAN LIKE WATER... SMOKE FILLED THE AIR... AND THE CUSTOMERS WERE MY KIND O' PEOPLE..

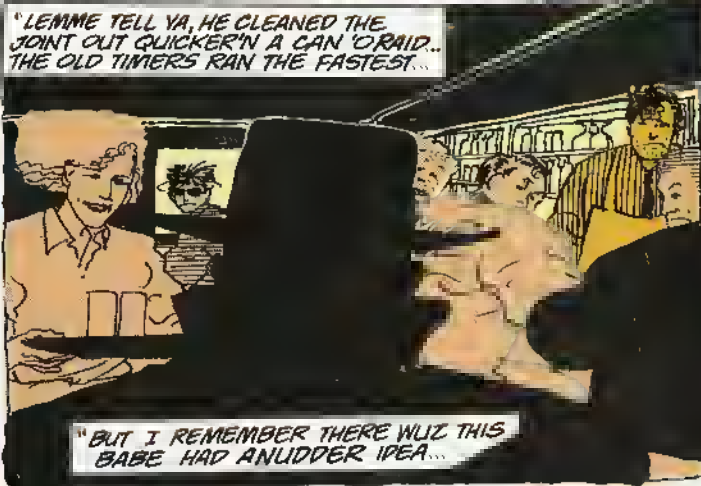


"TILL THE DAY HE WALKED IN..



"I'D FERGOT ABOUT HIM, SINCE HE KINDA WINKED OUT BACK IN '49... BUT HERE IT WUZ 1980, AND THERE HE WUZ... JUST THE SAME AS POP USE'YA DESCRIBE 'IM...

"LEMME TELL YA, HE CLEANED THE JOINT OUT QUICKER'N A CAN O'RAID... THE OLD TIMERS RAN THE FASTEST..



"BUT I REMEMBER THERE WUZ THIS BABE HAD ANUDDER IDEA...

"SHE STARTED COMIN' ON TA 'HIM... MAKIN' LIKE HE WAS JUST ANNUIDER JOHN..."



"WHAT WAS HER NAME, DEWITT? COULD SHE HAVE BEEN LENORE--?"

"FERGET THE BABE ANGLE, KID... IT JUST DON'T WASH..."

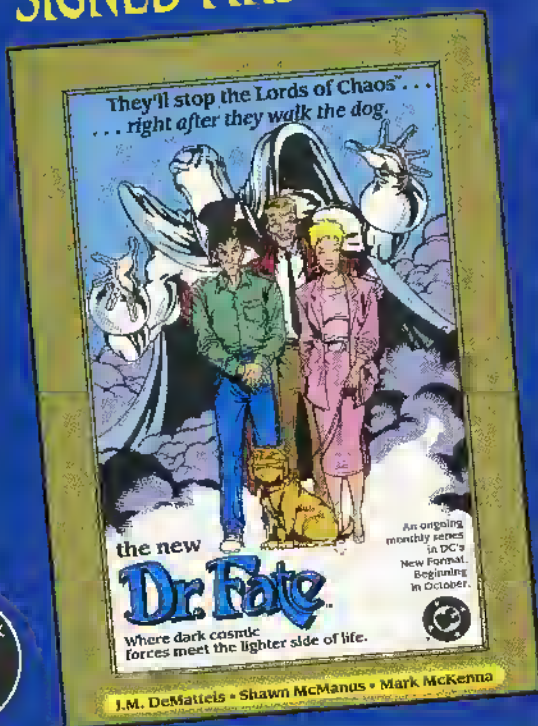


"I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA LOSE IT RIGHT THERE-- I HAD A BELLYFUL, Y'UNDERSTAND-- BUT HE SADDLED RIGHT ON UP TO THE BAR, LOOKED ME STRAIGHT IN THE EYE, AND SAID:



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"WELL, TALKIN' WAS THE LAST THING I EXPECTED OUTTA THE SHADOW-- SO WE WENT INTO THE BACK, WHERE IT WAS NICE 'N QUIET..."

DEWITT PEREZ... I KNEW YOUR FATHER WELL... THERE WERE MANY TIMES I WAS TEMPTED TO KILL HIM... BUT I... REFRAINED WE MADE A DEAL.

YOU WERE THAT DEAL IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS LIFE... HE PROMISED ME YOURS.

SOON I WILL RETURN TO AMERICA TO STAY--AND I NEED TO BE READY. YOU WILL BE THE FIRST OF MY OPERATIVES... YOUR COMPATIBILITY WITH THE UNDERWORLD WILL MAKE YOU INVALUABLE.

"THAT SOUNDED LIKE POP..."

BUT I NEED MORE AGENTS... MORE SPECIALISTS... AND YOU WILL LEAD ME TO THEM...

"I THOUGHT ABOUT IT FOR A SECOND... BESIDES A LITTLE ATTITUDE PROBLEM, HE SEEMED LIKE A PRETTY DECENT JOE."

"RIGHT AWAY, I KNEW THE KINDA GUY HE WUZ LOOKIN' FOR..."

PERHAPS I AM MISSING SOMETHING, DEWITT...

BUT I FAIL TO SEE HOW A WRESTLING MATCH WILL FURTHER MY ENDS...

SEE THAT GUY IN THE RING? HE'S YOUR MAN!

DEWITT... YOU MISS THE POINT. I AM NOT INTERESTED IN ANY ADDLE-BRAINED, MUSCLE-BOUND--

NO, NO! NOT DA WRESTLER--
--CHECK OUT 'IS TRAINER

HIM? THAT JITTERING BUNDLE OF NERVES?

THAT'S YOUR IDEA OF A POTENTIAL AGENT?!

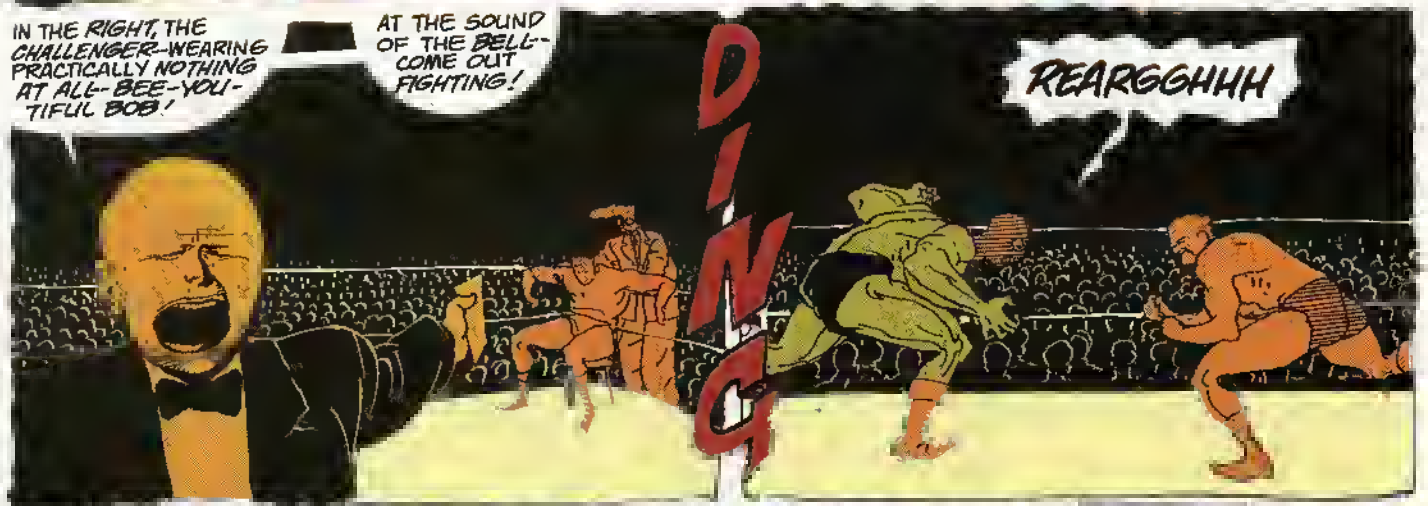
PERHAPS I WAS TOO HASTY IN SELECTING YOU, DEWITT--

HEY! THE GUY'S A WIZARD! JUST WATCH 'IM! ONCE HE GOES INTO ACTION, YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED-- PROMISE!



LAYDEEZ AND
GENNULMEN! FOR
YOUR AMUSEMENT
AND EDIFICATION, THIS
EVENING'S MAIN
ATTRACTION--A TITLE
MATCH FOR THE
GLOBAL WRESTLING
CHAMPEENSHIP!

IN THE LEFT
CORNER, THE
CHAMPEEN--
WEARING BLACK
BODY SUIT AND
POLY/COTTON
SKI MASK--
MAD DOG
MAGDON!



IN THE RIGHT, THE
CHALLENGER--WEARING
PRACTICALLY NOTHING
AT ALL--BEE-YOU-
TIFUL BOB!

AT THE SOUND
OF THE BELL--
COME OUT
FIGHTING!

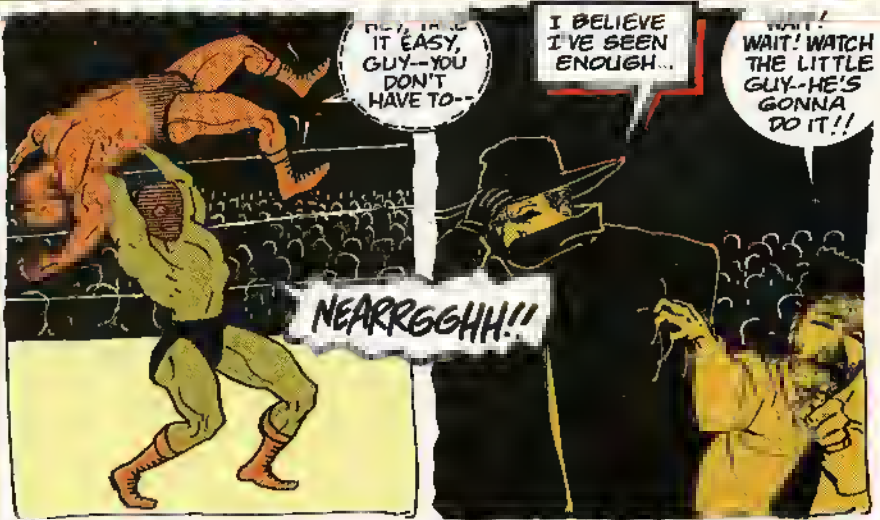
D
I
N
G

REARRGGHHH



SLAMM!

--OOPS...



HEY, THAT'S
IT EASY,
GUY--YOU
DON'T
HAVE TO--

I BELIEVE
I'VE SEEN
ENOUGH...

WAIT! WATCH
THE LITTLE
GUY--HE'S
GONNA
DO IT!!

NEARRGGHH!!

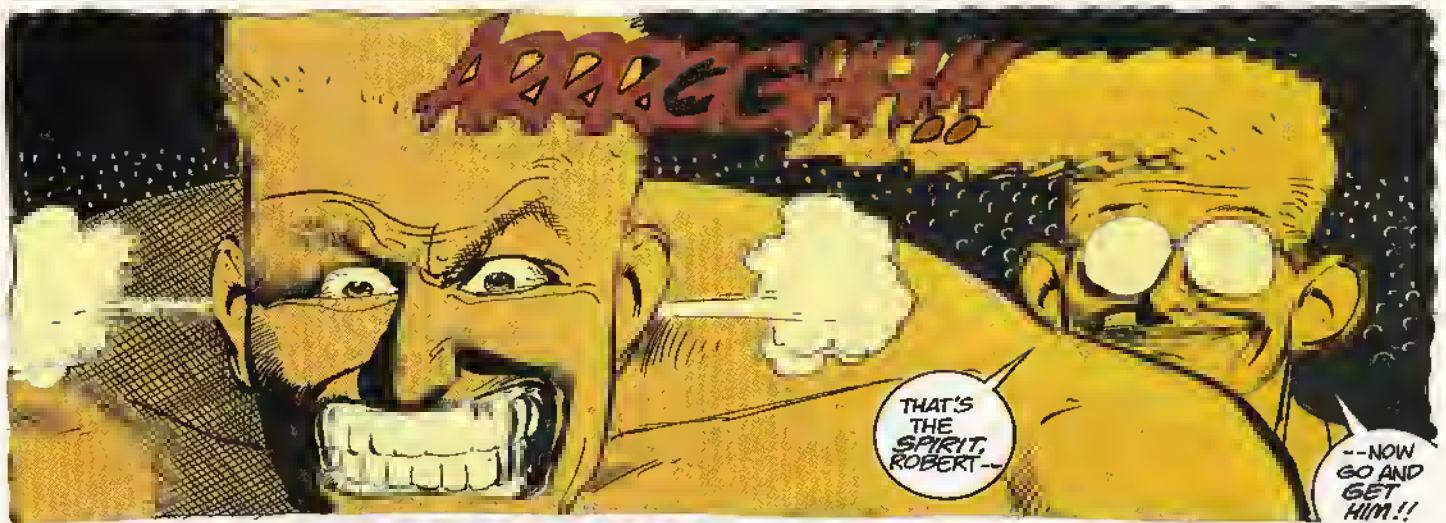


WHUH-
WHUH-
WHUH-
WHUH

C'MON
BOB! THIS
WAY..

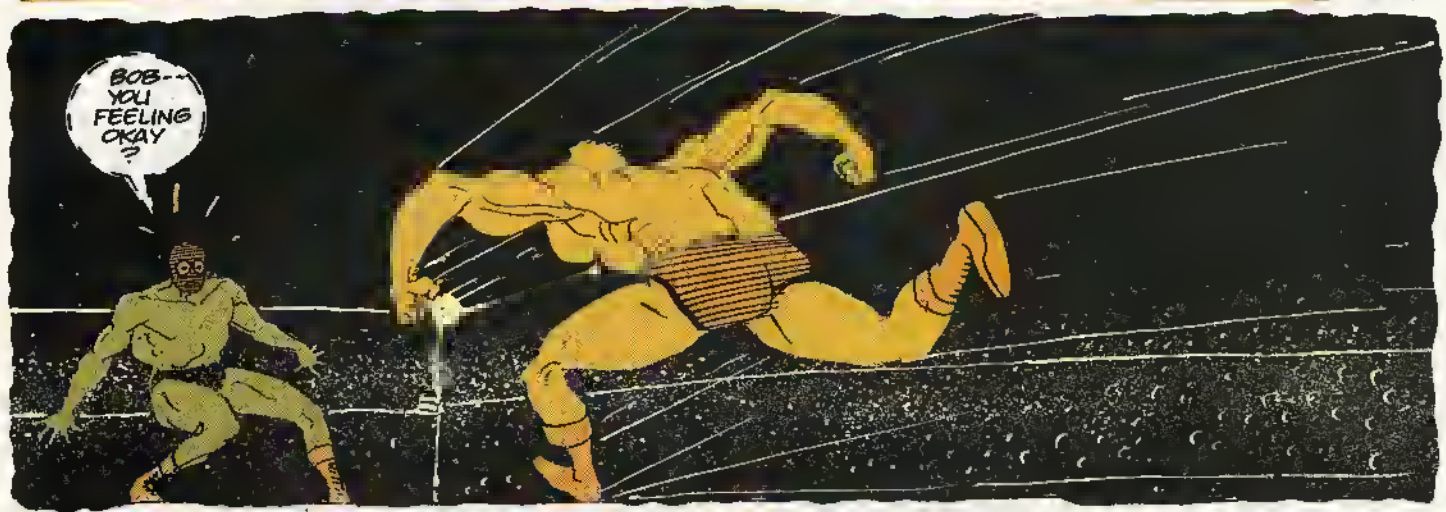


HERE YOU
GO--

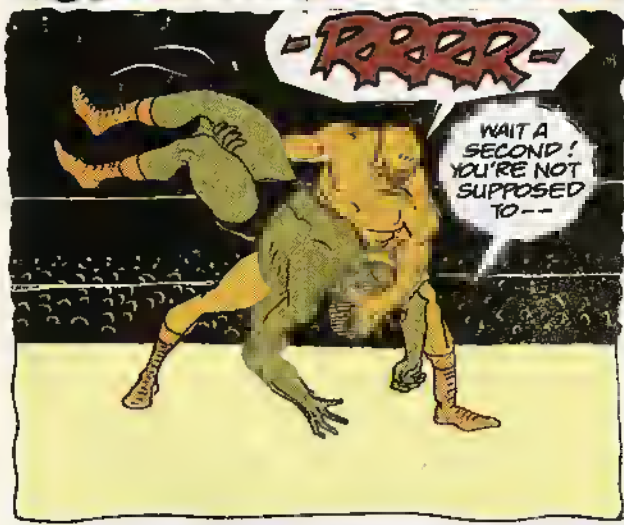


THAT'S THE SPIRIT, ROBERT--

--NOW GO AND GET HIM!!



BOB-- YOU FEELING OKAY?



-ROARR-

WAIT A SECOND! YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO--



NARRGH! NARRGH! NARRGH!



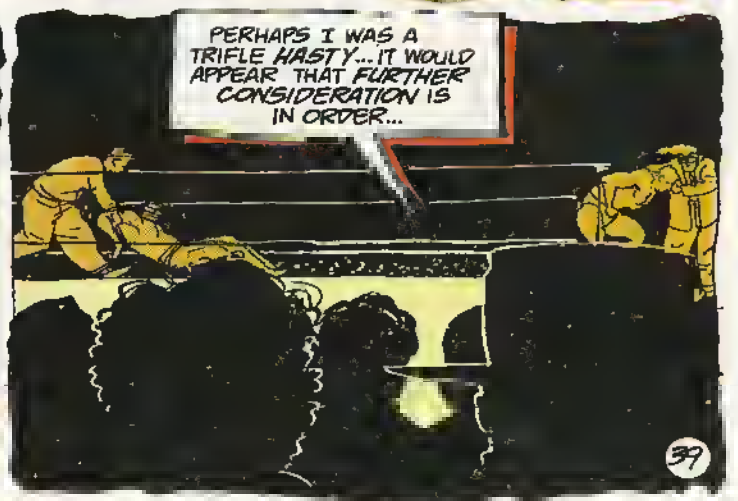
I GIVE! I GIVE!!

GGG RRR FFF

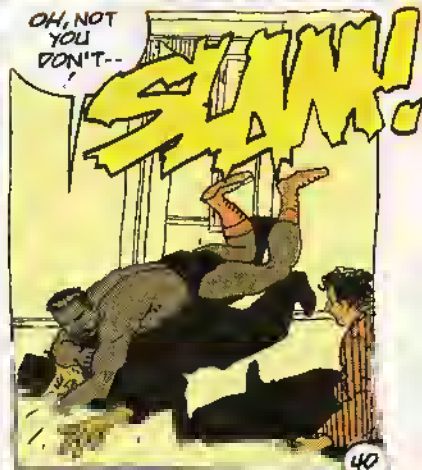
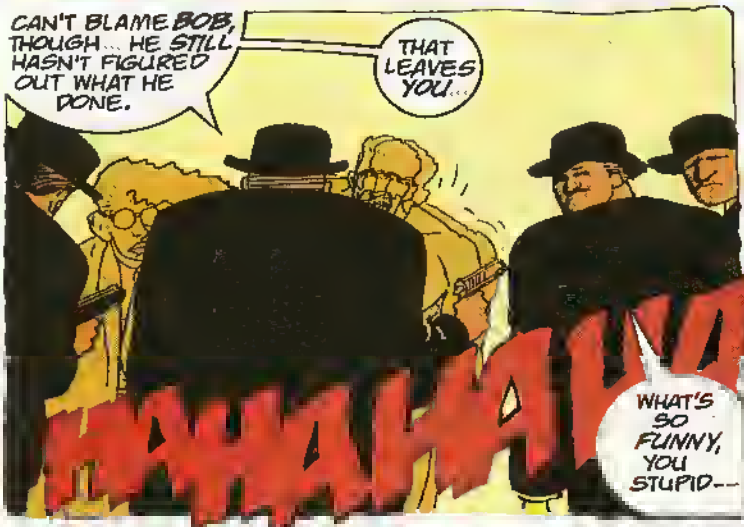
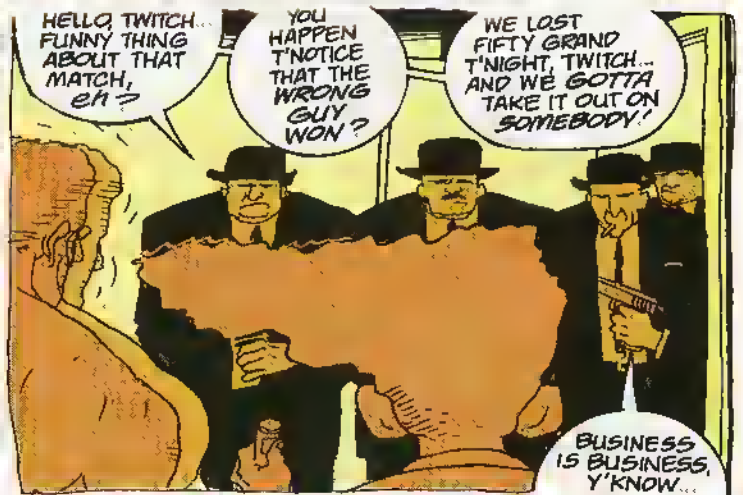
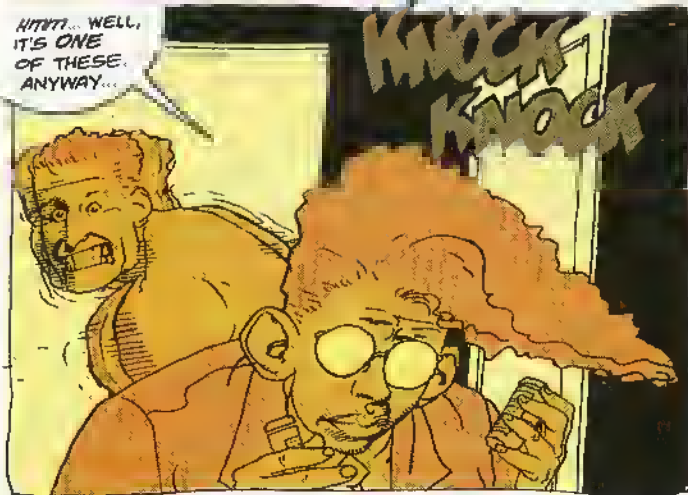
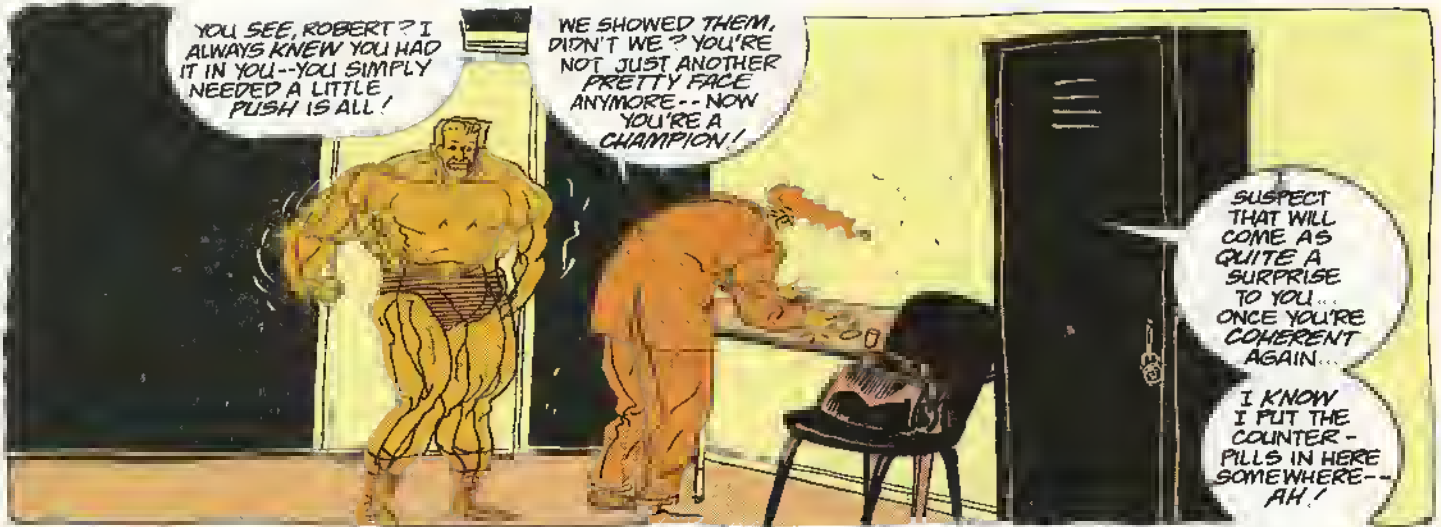


SEE--WHA'D I TELL YA!

YES... HE DOES SEEM RATHER SKILLED IN ADVANCED MOTIVATIONAL TECHNIQUES...



PERHAPS I WAS A TRIFLE HASTY...IT WOULD APPEAR THAT FURTHER CONSIDERATION IS IN ORDER...



I'VE HAD IT
WITH YOU GUYS--
YOU HEAR
ME?!

FIRST YOU
SET ME UP AS
CHAMP... THEN
YOU PUT ME IN THE
RING WITH THAT...
THAT... ANIMAL...
AND NOW I CATCH
YOU TRYING TO
TAKE OFF WITH
MY PIECE OF
THE PURSE!

THERE'S
GOT TO BE
A BETTER WAY
FOR A GUY TO
WORK HIS WAY
THROUGH TEACHER'S
COLLEGE THAN
THIS!

HMM...
NOW THAT
YA MENTION
IT... I THINK
I GOT ONE
WAY FOR
YA...

AND WHAT
WOULD
THAT
BE?

FIRST
I GOTTA
CHECK WID
DA BOSS--
SEE IF YA
QUALIFY.

THIS
WAY, UH--

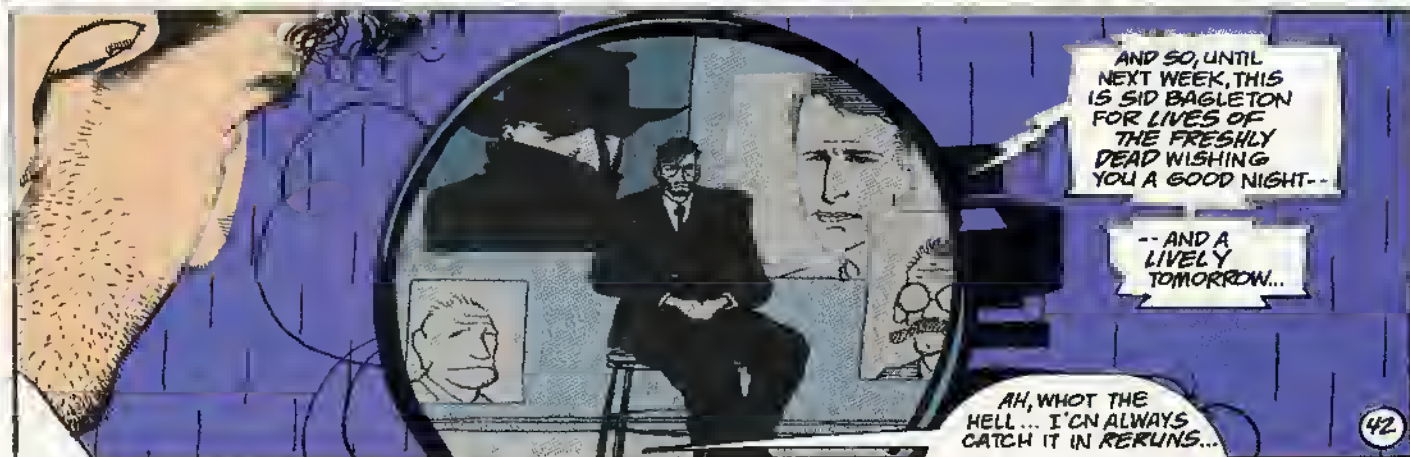
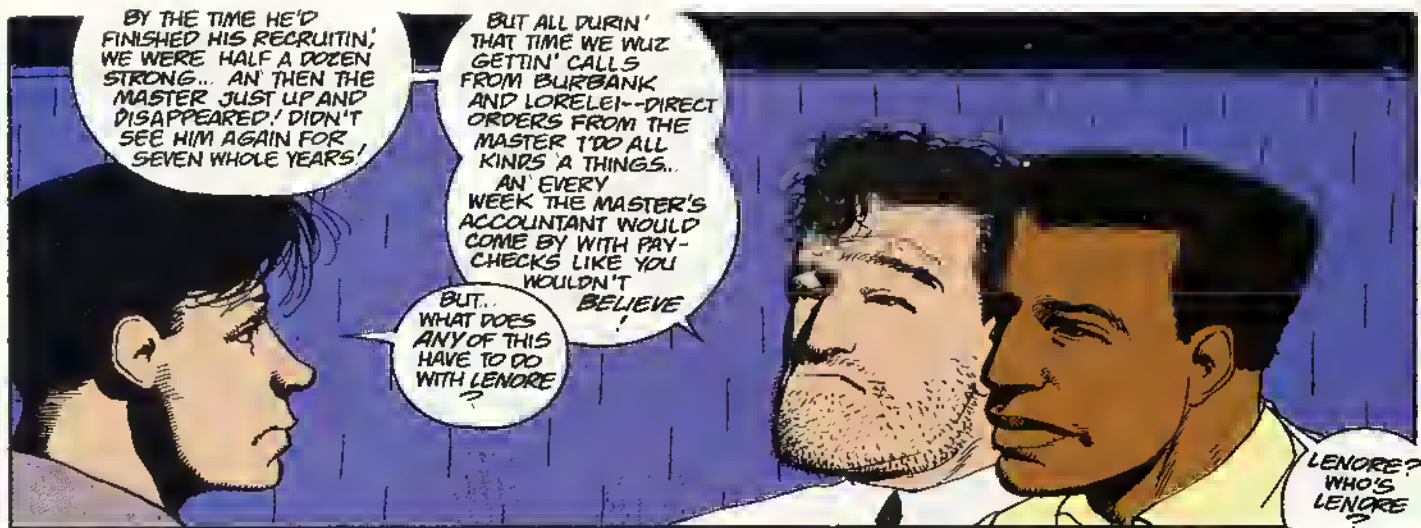
ELTON...
ELTON
BUTTERFIELD--
FORMERLY
MAD DOG MAGOON...

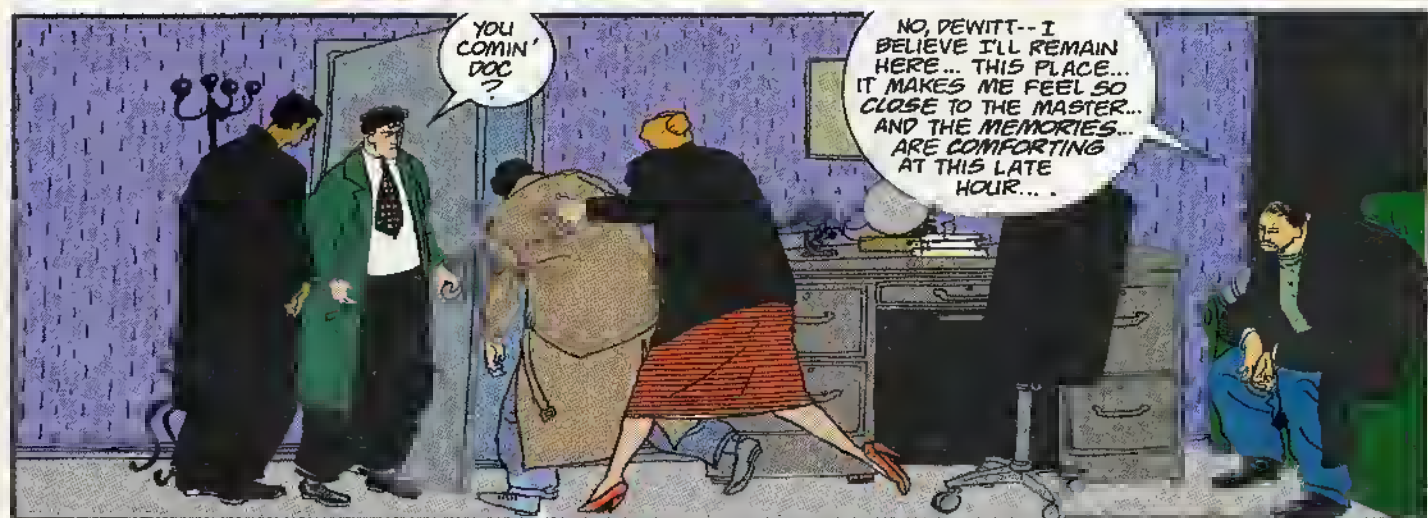
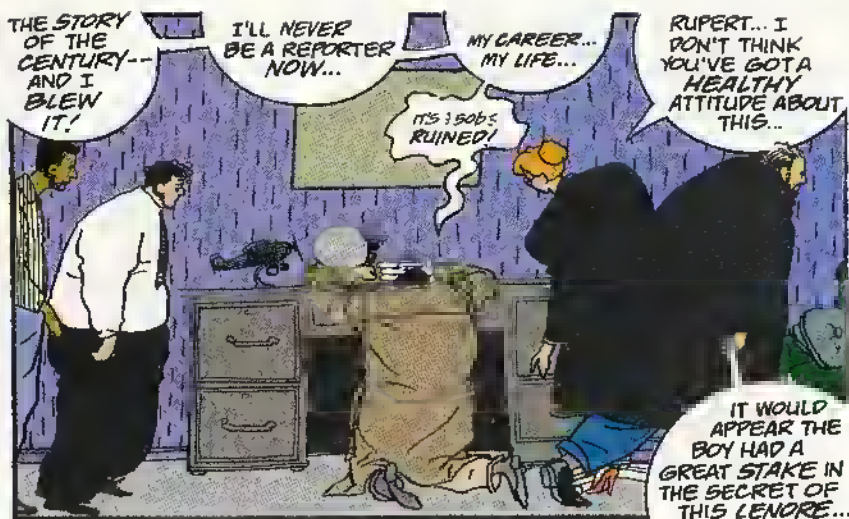
TWITCHKOWITZ. I
SAVED YOUR LIFE...
YOU OWE ME ONE
IN RETURN.

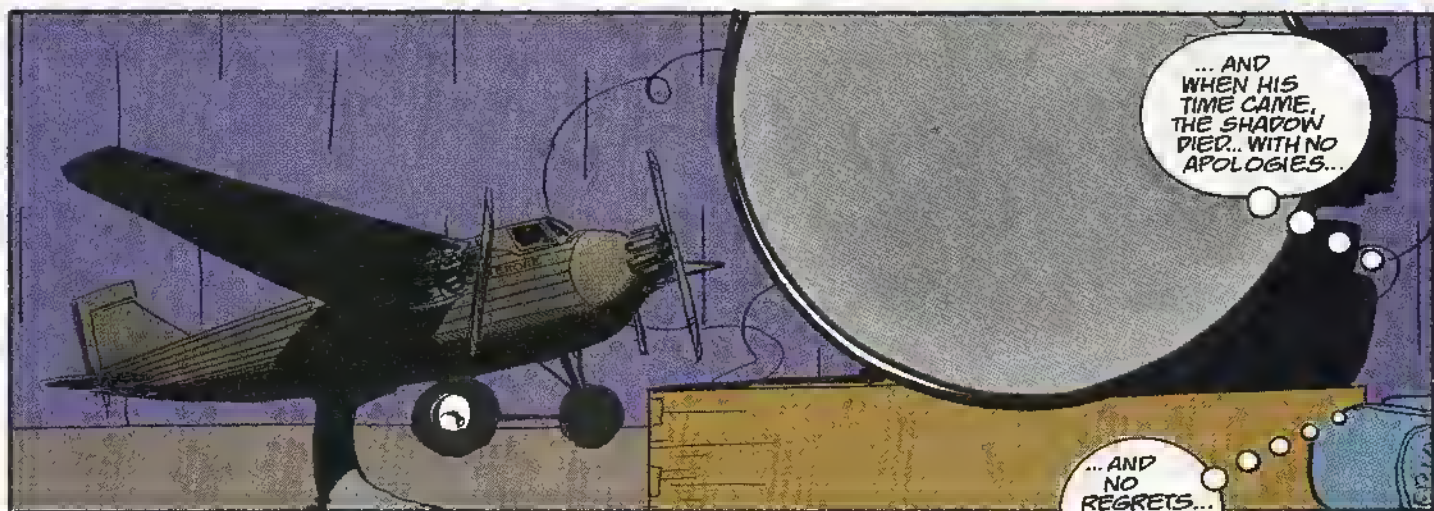
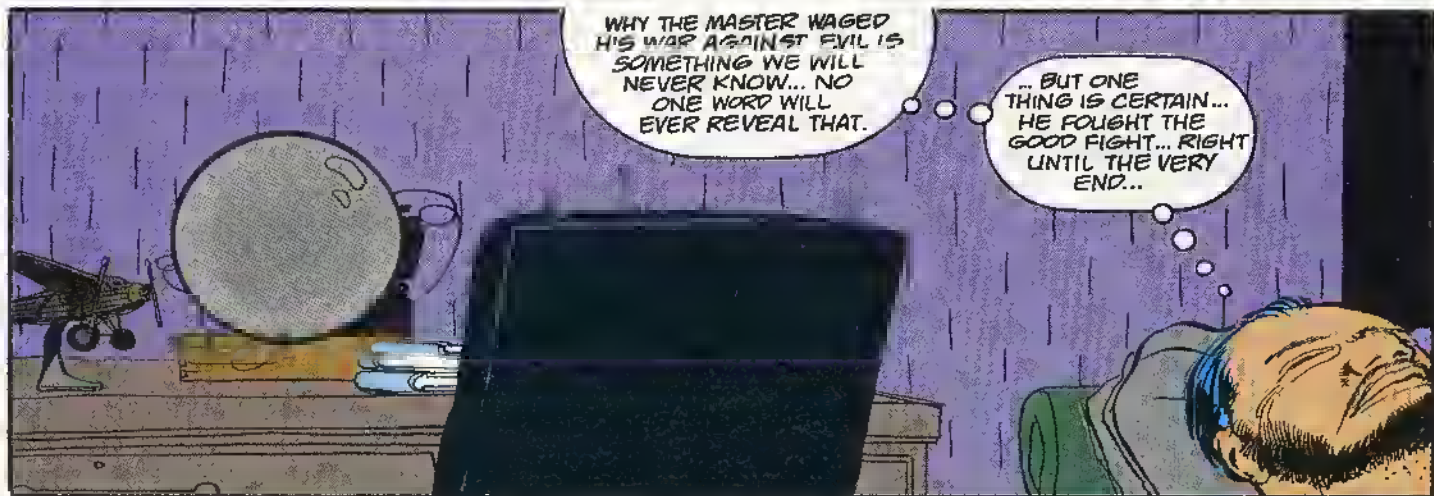
I SUPPOSE
IT'S AS GOOD
A CAREER
CHANGE AS ANY...
SINCE I DOUBT
MY REPUTATION IN
THE WRESTLING
WORLD WILL
SURVIVE THIS
LITTLE
INCIDENT...

DO NOT TAKE MY OFFER
LIGHTLY, TWITCH. YOU
HAVE BEEN SELECTED
FOR YOUR UNIQUE SKILLS
TO JOIN AN ELITE GROUP
OF OPERATIVES... OF
THE WORLD'S POPULACE,
A MERE HANDFUL
ARE CHOSEN TO--

HEY
MASTER!
HERE'S
ANNUER
ONE FOR
YA!







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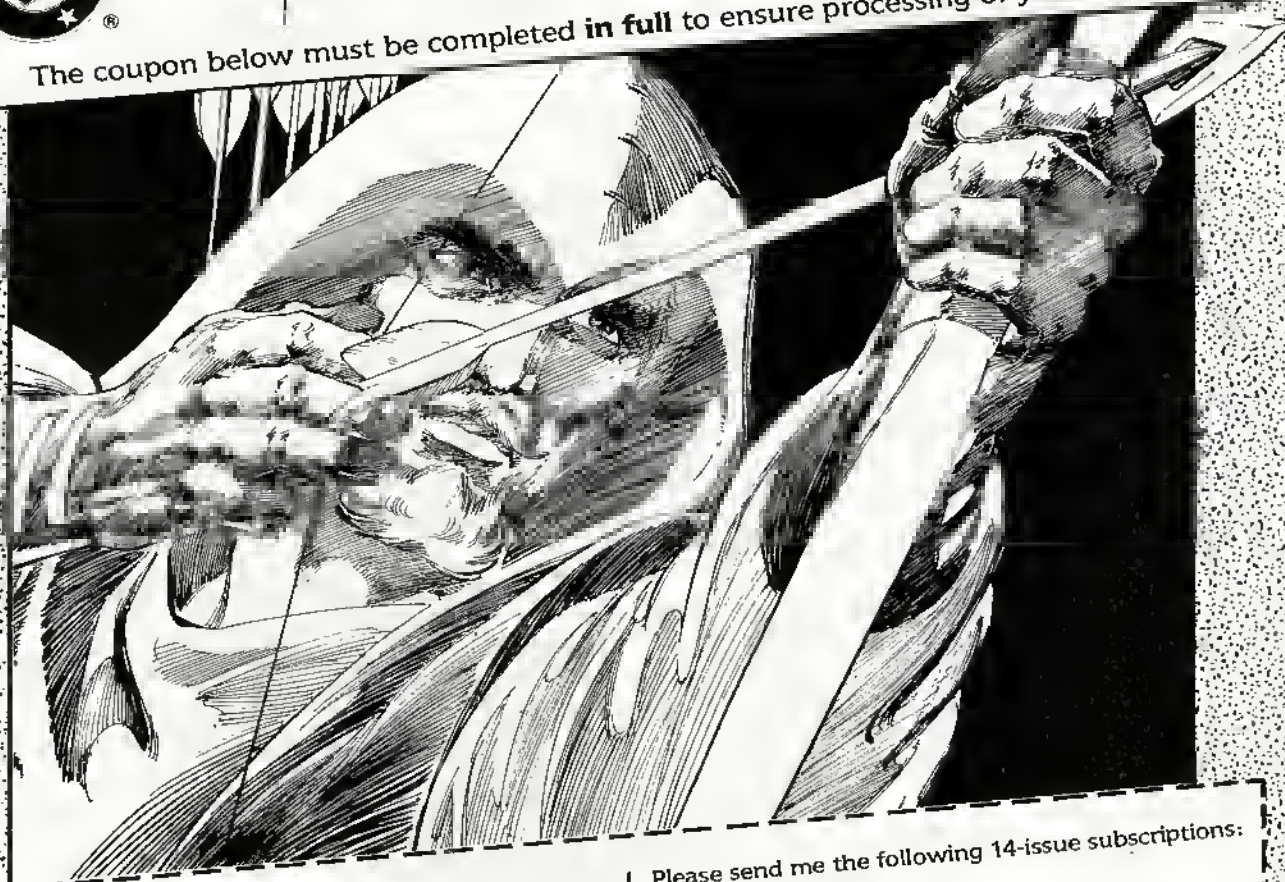


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